PROSOCIAL BEHAVIORS OF 5-YEAR-OLDS IN THREE DIFFERENT CURRICULAR CONTEXTS OF A MIXED-AGE LABORATORY PRESCHOOL

By

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Dedicated to
Mary Virginia Peaslee,
the most prosocial of all

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Abstract of Dissertation Presented to the Graduate School
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The purpose of this study was to investigate in detail the different kinds of prosocial behaviors that occurred during the different curricular contexts of center/activity time, snack time, and outdoor play time. Different curricular contexts promoted different kinds of prosocial behavior. The study focused on two guiding questions:

1. What kinds of prosocial behaviors do 5-year-olds exhibit during center/activity time, snack time, and outdoor play time?

2. What kinds of prosocial behaviors do 5-year-olds exhibit during interactions with (a) adults, (b) peers, and (c) younger children?

The researcher used qualitative research methods to collect and analyze data for observations made during the preschool day for 87 hours during March, April, May, and

June. These observations focused on interactions during different curricular times and between 5-year-olds and the other people with whom they interacted. The researcher conducted informal interviews with the children and staff members and examined children's cumulative school records.

Data analysis was an ongoing process. The analysis revealed 32 different indicators of prosocial behavior which occurred during three different curricular contexts: center/activity time, snack time, and outdoor play time.

During center/activity time the art, writing, and woodworking centers promoted the most prosocial behavior. At snack time sharing behavior was most frequent, and during outdoor play time positive physical contact was the most common kind of prosocial behavior. The 5-year-olds interacted equally with adults, peers, and younger children.

This study highlighted the interactions which occurred in a mixed-age preschool setting. The results suggested that in order for teachers to provide experiences which promote prosocial behavior, they must be aware of how different curricular contexts of the preschool day influence subsequent interactions between children.

CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Many researchers have investigated prosocial behavior in young children, but the effect of different curricular contexts on prosocial behavior has only been given attention as a secondary variable effect. The impact that different curricular contexts could have on the social development of young children intrigued the researcher.

The researcher investigated the circumstances surrounding the kinds of prosocial behaviors that could occur as children interacted within the different curricular contexts of center/activity time, snack time, and outdoor play time. After an extensive review of the research on the prosocial development of young children, the researcher discovered that this question had not been addressed by researchers. Dr. Lillian Katz, the Director of ERIC (Educational Resources Information Center), agreed in a telephone interview that researchers had as yet not explored the impact of curricular contexts on children's prosocial behavior (personal communication, November 12, 1991).

If children exhibit different kinds of prosocial behaviors during interactions that occur within different curricular contexts, practitioners should be made aware of these contextual effects as they affect behavior. If particular kinds of prosocial behavior occur at a specific center, teachers and program directors who are aware of those behaviors can promote the corresponding aspects of social development. Teachers and program directors can note specific prosocial behaviors among young children within certain centers and then make informed decisions regarding the development of specific learning centers.

Prosocial Behavior

Prosocial behavior plays a critical role in the formation of positive interpersonal relationships. High altruistic behavior was positively related to children's popularity among peers (Hartup, Glazer, & Charlesworth, 1967), as well as how much help they received from peers (Mannarino, 1976; Raviv, Bar-Tal, Ayalon, & Ravin, 1980). Prosocial behavior was also positively correlated with self-concept (Midlarsky, 1968; Staub, 1978) as well as personal happiness (Moore, Underwood, & Rosehan, 1973). Younger children who received specific training in prosocial behavior exhibited fewer incidents of aggression (Feshbach, 1982) and more incidents of improved peer relationships (Cooper, Johnson, Johnson, & Wilderson, 1980).

Ladd (1990) investigated kindergarten children's peer relations and school adjustment and found that children who had more classroom friends at the beginning of school and maintained these relationships, liked school better and made gains in school performance. Ladd and Price (1987) found that children who exhibited a wide variety of positive prosocial behaviors in preschool tended to be liked by their new classmates in kindergarten, while children who were aggressive in preschool became rejected in kindergarten.

Hartup (1991) suggested that peer relationships were related to social and cognitive development, which in turn contributed to the way adults functioned:

> Indeed, the single best childhood predictor of adult adaptation is not IQ, not school grades, and not classroom behavior but rather the adequacy with which the child gets along with other children. Children who are generally disliked, who are aggressive and disruptive, who are unable to sustain close relationships with other children, and who cannot establish a place for themselves in the peer culture are seriously "at risk." (p. 1)

As early as 1959, Gronlund stressed the importance of educators being able to identify the factors that lead to satisfying social interactions among children. He highlighted the need to develop specific strategies for helping children who have difficulty with peer relationships. It seemed highly probable that once this researcher identified the different kinds of prosocial behavior that occurred during interactions of 5-year-olds engaged in certain curricular contexts (center/activity time, snack time, outdoor play time), she could make recommendations regarding appropriate choices and environments for all children including those who have problems relating with other children.

In addition, few of the studies of children's prosocial development focused on how prosocial behavior was affected by different preschool settings, presenting a problem because early childhood specialists are not able to give specific recommendations to teachers as to the most appropriate activities to plan for promoting prosocial development.

This researcher was interested in prosocial behavior as it naturally occurred in a preschool utilizing mixed-age grouping. Of particular interest was the behavior of 5-year-olds as they interacted with younger children, peers, and adults during center/activity time, snack time, and outdoor play time.

Statement of the Problem

Some children today are not as prosocial in their interactions with others as adults would like them to be. Positive social relationships with peers are necessary for healthy development according to Hartup (1989). Coie and Kupersmidt (1983), Haskins (1989), Kagen (1988), Lee, Brooks-Gunn, and Schnur (1988), and Parker and Asher (1987) found peer rejection to be an indicator of adaption problems.

Concurring with Hartup (1989), Head Start program specialists have long promoted the importance of children's development of social competence (Mallory & Goldsmith, 1990). In Head Start, social competence is defined as the child's ongoing effectiveness in dealing with both the current environment and the responsibilities that will develop in later life. Of all the behaviors a person is capable of demonstrating, those that benefit others are of particular importance. According to Miller (1991), "Helping, sharing, donating, rescuing, defending, comforting, and cooperating are essential to an individual's and society's maintenance and well-being" (p. 452). Haney (1978) proposed that "the job of schools is to develop good citizens. The ability to get along with peers and to act prosocially--as well as the ability to read--are important components of a democratic education" (p. 37). Knowing how different parts of our preschool curriculum (center/activity time, snack time, and outdoor play time) promote different kinds of prosocial behaviors will help teachers design settings that encourage prosocial interactions among participants.

Along with Head Start program specialists, researchers also supported the importance of children's social development in the preschool years. Several correlational studies suggested that relationships existed between problems in peer relations during the early years and adjustment difficulties in later life (Coie & Kupersmidt, 1983; Dodge et al., 1986; East, Hess, & Lerner, 1987). These later-life difficulties included mental health problems (Cowen, Pederson, Babigian, Izzo, & Trost, 1973; Kohn & Clausen, 1955), delinquency (Kupersmidt, 1983; Roff, Sells, & Golden, 1972), suicide (Stengel, 1971), and dropping out of school (Kupersmidt, 1983; Ullmann, 1957). Current research reports echoed these findings, showing that children who had good peer relationships enjoyed school more and were less likely to experience academic difficulties, drop out of school, and commit delinquent or criminal acts in later years than age mates who related poorly with their peers (Kupersmidt, 1983; Ladd, 1990; Parker & Asher, 1987).

Even though we realize the problems faced by children who have poor peer relatationships, to date, no one has tried to determine how to avoid this problem of adjustment by investigating the effect preschool curricular contexts could have on the development of prosocial behaviors. Researchers have not yet identified for practitioners all of the kinds of prosocial behavior that can occur when 5-year-olds interact in different preschool settings and with children of different ages, peers, and adults.

If some contexts of the curriculum are likely to promote certain kinds of prosocial behavior, teachers need to know exactly what happens during curricular contexts that, in turn, promote different kinds of prosocial behavior in children. Currently, the educational community knows little about the types of curricular changes that could enhance prosocial behavior, making a friendlier, more positive climate in the school setting.

Purpose of the Study

The primary purpose for the present investigation was to determine the kinds of prosocial behaviors that occurred spontaneously during different curricular contexts in a mixed-age preschool. Teachers need to have the information necessary to make appropriate curricular choices for the children in their care. If research shows that some specific preschool curricular contexts in the preschool (in this case, center/activity time, snack time, and outdoor play time) promote different kinds of specific prosocial behaviors, then teachers responsible for program planning need to be aware of those differences.

The educational community does not know exactly how the curricular context(center/activity time, snack time, and outdoor play time) affords opportunities for children's prosocial development, presenting a problem because practitioners have not as yet been presented with evidence of how different curricular contexts provide an environment in which prosocial development in children can flourishes. Specifically, the purpose of this study was to examine the following research questions:

1. What kinds of prosocial behaviors do 5-year-olds exhibit during center/activity time, snack time, and outdoor play time?
2. What kinds of prosocial behaviors do 5-year-olds exhibit during interactions with

a. adults?

b. peers?

c. younger children?

During the past 20 years, researchers who have focused on the development of prosocial behavior of children have concentrated on the roles mothers have played in childrearing practices, family interaction, biology, culture, peer acceptance, mixed-age grouping, the effect of the teacher/role model, and the age of the children. In a review of prosocial literature, the researcher found no studies that explored how children's prosocial development was associated with their interactions within different curricular contexts, such as center/activity time, snack time, and outdoor play time. This study will describe, analyze, and interpret the reasons there are differences in both amounts and kinds of prosocial interactions during different curricular contexts so that preschool program planners can explain their rationale for curricular choices.

Researchers have already looked at effects on learning, relationships, and prosocial behavior in the normal population and "at risk" children. Although researchers have investigated the prosocial behaviors of 3- and 4-year-old children, they have not directly looked at the different kinds of prosocial behaviors that can occur during the curricular contexts of center/activity time, snack time, and outdoor play time. The purpose of this study was to show how the context of preschool activities within one laboratory preschool afforded opportunities for prosocial behavior among peers and adults and younger children. It may be that appropriate ways of interacting with others can develop in the preschool environment. Knowing how certain daily activities afforded more opportunities for various types of prosocial behavior is helpful in promoting school adjustment as well as positive peer relations and eventually contributing to the academic success of individual children (Ladd, 1990).

Limitation to the Study

Thirty-nine children aged 3, 4, and 5 years old who were enrolled in the mixed-age laboratory preschool at Florida Southern College were the participants in this study. This sample, although small, represented a mixed-age, -sex, and -SES level of 3-, 4-, and 5-year-old preschoolers. The laboratory preschool was a 3-hour-a-day program. The school met from 12:30 until 3:30 p.m. Because the children were in a preexisting group, they did not constitute a random sample. It is possible that all of the parents with children in this program had similar ideas about effective and appropriate preschool experiences for their young children. Several of the children enrolled had older brothers and sisters who were also in this program. The findings of this study were applicable only to this special population.

A thorough description of the preschool setting and the daily routine of the children is included in Chapter III to provide information for the interpretation of the results of this investigation.

The presence of an observer could possibly have had an effect on children's behavior. However, the researcher spent 8 months in the preschool prior to the investigation. Observers were very common in this classroom and should have had very little effect on the children's behavior. Therefore, observer presence was minimized in this study.

Delimitation of the Study

The size and composition of the groups may have had an impact on the behavior of the children. The preschool kept the groups somewhat balanced in terms of the number of children, percentage of boys versus girls, and percentage of different-aged children. The time of year during which this study was conducted could have had an effect on the results. Children observed at the beginning of a school term may have behaved differently than children observed at the end of a school term. The curriculum utilized in this preschool could also have limited findings. The school utilized neither an academic focus nor a play curriculum but proposed a developmentally appropriate language-rich environment with a Piagetian philosophy, according to the center director. An additional delimitation could have stemmed from extending the lab for an additional 7 weeks (May and June, 1992) to allow for data collection. The researcher observed the children for 15 weeks. However, the same teachers and students were in attendance and utilized the same schedule and curriculum. The organization of this preschool was markedly different from typical Florida preschools. In this center, two college faculty members oversaw the teachers and support teachers who actually taught the three groups. The teachers and support teachers were fulfilling part of their educational requirements and were not paid for their participation. Actually, these teachers and support teachers were all prosocial in their interactions with each other and the children. When the research investigation was extended into May and June, all of the participating teachers and support teachers continued to work in the preschool without monetary remuneration in order to help the researcher who was also one of their college professors. The researcher also believes the atmosphere of the preschool was prosocial because the center director always demonstrated a prosocial attitude. During the course of this study, the center director did whatever was possible to help the researcher with her study. These factors all limited the generalizability of the findings of this study.

Significance of the Study

This study was designed to discover, analyze, and interpret what kinds of prosocial behavior 5-year-olds exhibited during center/activity time, snack time, and outdoor play time and with adults, peers, and younger children. This study incorporates theories of prosocial development as they relate to the early childhood curriculum, adding to the research base of prosocial behavior.

Definition of Terms

Behavior is conduct, how one physically interacts with others.

Cross-age friendship is a friendship between children of at least 1 year difference in age, one older child and one younger child (e.g., a 3-year-old and a 4-year-old).

Curricular contexts are the planned learning activities in which children engage during their school program. In this study the curricular contexts under investigation are activity/center time, snack time, and outdoor play.

Friendship is the feeling of being attached to another by affection or personal regard.

Mixed-age grouping is the practice of teaching a group of young children of varying ages.

Preschool is an organized program for children from 3 to 5 years of age.

Prosocial behaviors are actions that aid or benefit another person. Some examples of those actions are giving, sharing, taking turns, providing aid to someone in need, giving instruction, praising, showing concern for someone in distress, showing delight for someone experiencing pleasure, waiting patiently for a turn, and helping another to do a task.

Social competence is the child's ongoing effectiveness in dealing with both the current environment and the responsibilities that will develop in later life.

Support teacher is a college student enrolled in EDU 311 (Early Childhood Education Part 1) who serves as an assistant to the teacher.

Teacher is a college student enrolled in EDU 312 (Early Childhood Education Part 2) who serves as teacher for the preschool group. The teacher had previously served as a support teacher.

CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF THE RESEARCH

A survey of the literature related to this study includes an investigation of prosocial behavior especially as it occurs in preschool settings. In the following sections, the researcher examined reports of research conducted in relation to prosocial behavior.

Theoretical Framework

The researcher designed the present study to investigate the circumstances surrounding prosocial behaviors of young children in a preschool environment. Researchers have already investigated influences upon prosocial behavior by such factors as age, personality characteristics, motivations, capabilities, and judgments (Staub, 1979). No researcher has directly investigated the effect different curricular contexts have on prosocial development, the topic of the present research project. Knowing how various preschool curricular contexts provide prosocial opportunities for different interactions among young children will be of help to early childhood teachers as they plan appropriate experiences for the children in their care.

In an attempt to determine a theoretical framework in which to imbed this investigation of prosocial behavior, Corsaro (1985) can be quoted as saying that "the constructivist approach is best suited to deal with the complexities of human development" (p. 72). Constructivist approaches to socialization concentrate heavily on the importance of the child's activities (curricular contexts) in the environment, as evidenced by Piaget's (1959) suggestion to use activity to compensate for disequilibrium. Vygotsky (1978) also emphasized the importance of curricular contexts, particularly while interacting with others. He argued that cognition is dependent upon language. Language is best learned through interaction with other language users. Corsaro (1985) extended the constructivist view by explaining that "children not only act on their environment, they participate in a social world" (p. 73). This approach fits quite nicely with the current research investigation because it seeks to determine the kinds of prosocial behavior 5-year-old children engage in during different curricular contexts with different-aged people. Children continually shape their environment, depending on with whom they interact.

Many more possibilities for interaction among different-aged children exist in a setting utilizing mixed-age grouping than in a homogeneous group of children. Furman, Rahe, and Hartup (1979) found that when teachers exposed socially isolated preschoolers to play sessions with pairs of younger children, they eventually became more socially involved in the classroom than were isolated children whom teachers exposed to play sessions with children of their own age.

There is not one existing theory that deals completely with the formation and development of prosocial characteristics (Eisenberg & Mussen, 1989). After reviewing studies dealing with prosocial behavior, Eisenberg and Mussen concluded that many empirical questions about prosocial development are derived from sources other than theories. However, the cognitive developmental theorists have contributed to an understanding of the development of prosocial behavior by highlighting the importance of reasoning and other processes influencing prosocial behavior (Bar-Tal, Raviv, & Goldberg, 1982; Eisenberg, 1986).

Traditional cognitive developmental theorists believe children act on the environment, just as the environment acts on them. However, to date, no researcher has systematically investigated how the incidences of prosocial behavior in a mixed-age preschool are related to curricular contexts such as center/activity time, snack time, and outdoor play time, which brings to light the need for this research project.

Mussen (1983) organized prosocial behaviors into the following three major types:

1. What is the nature of the development of prosocial behaviors. Where does it begin? How does it change? What causes change?

2. What are the processes and conditions through which prosocial orientations and behavior are learned? This may be related to the development of prosocial behavior.

3. How is prosocial behavior organized within the personality of the child?

The focus of this research related to the second type of research on prosocial behaviors: Under which conditions are various prosocial behaviors most likely to be exhibited? More specifically, during which curricular contexts are different kinds of prosocial behaviors likely to be exhibited?

Piaget (1959, 1965) is well known for his view that cognitive development occurs in stages. According to this theory, intellectual development is not an amassing of facts and skills but a progression of four levels of cognitive ability. Piaget advocates that children not be viewed as incomplete when compared to adults. According to Piaget, children perceive and organize their worlds in ways very different from adults. If a theoretical framework is to be applied to the prosocial development of children, it must consider the child's level of cognitive development in an attempt to explain children's understanding of the adult world as well as their participation in peer interactions. Curriculum planners must be aware of Piaget's (1965) levels of cognitive development in order to avoid distorted interpretations of research conducted in early childhood settings.

Piaget (1959) discussed the contributions of peer interactions as opposed to those of children with adults. "Where the superiority of the adult prevents discussion and cooperation, the playfellow provides the opportunity for such social conduct as will determine the true socialization of the intelligence" (p. 26). On the basis of Piaget's work (1959), pretend play has been hypothesized to contribute to social competency by providing a context for peer negotiation and the resolution of conflict (Rubin & Pepler, 1980; Rubin, Fein, & Vanderberg, 1983). Spontaneous play has shown more positive, successful, and reciprocal interactions in young children than has nonpretend social activity (Connolly & Doyle, 1984; Connolly, Doyle, & Reznick, 1988); therefore, it may be that social skills are then generalized to nonpretend interactions, whereby children see their peers more positively.

Vygotsky (1978) proposed that human consciousness is achieved by the internalization of shared social behavior. What we learn while talking and working with others becomes the way we think and feel. What we achieve first through cooperation with others provides "experience traces" that strengthen our behaviors.

Expanding on Vygotsky's theory, Rogoff (1990) proposed that the cognitive development of children usually occurs within the context of a social relationship. Rogoff's study leads to the idea that young children are actually "apprentices in thinking" and learn while observing and interacting with peers and other skilled persons. Apparently, children actually shape their own environment through their interaction with it. This research investigation sought to determine the different kinds of prosocial behavior that occur in the different curricular contexts of a preschool. Depending on with whom the 5-year-olds interacted (peers, adults, or younger children), the environment changed.

Prosocial Behavior in Young Children

Researchers have conducted much of the qualitative observational research concerning prosocial behaviors of children between 2 and 6 years of age in the natural preschool setting. This researcher also conducted the present investigation in a natural preschool setting.

This section discusses studies of prosocial behavior evidenced in young children in relation to the current investigation, examines observational research similar to this study, and highlights studies which suggest conditions which could facilitate prosocial behavior in young children.

Although it did not occur in a preschool setting, a questionnaire study undertaken by Boeck in Germany in 1909 (reported by Stern, 1924) asked parents to describe situations in which their 2- to 6-year-old children expressed sympathy. There were a total of 408 responses:

Children's ages in years	2	3	4	5	6
# of cases of sympathy reported by parents	66	95	94	93	60

The high frequency of parental reports of sympathy suggested that prosocial behavior is common in children from 2 to 6 years of age. However, it is questionable as to how many parents accurately reported their children's responses, with no reliability checks built into the design of the study. The children in this study were of the same approximate age as the children in the current investigation.

Murphy (1937) conducted another major study combining over 100 days of direct observation with staged situations. She studied the wide range of prosocial behaviors that preschoolers exhibited. Using a coding system, Murphy found considerable variation in the responses of children. Of 70 children studied, 18 were never observed showing sympathy for another person. Some children often received sympathy while others were ignored. There was a negligible relationship between the frequency of giving and receiving sympathy. It seems that the prosocial behaviors that researchers have investigated in preschools have been naturally occurring in the context of family life in the years spent before attending preschool. Much of the research seeking to explain the differences in the prosocial behavior of children correlates the occurrence of prosocial behavior to the mothers' parenting style (Kohn, 1990). Research done on prosocial development in the 1970s reflected the belief that all children need support and guidance in order to develop prosocially. Kohn (1990) believed that schools neglect this area of development.

Murphy (1937), Hay and Rhinegold (1979), and Zahn-Waxler and Radke-Yarrow (1982) concluded that children under the age of 4 are not extremely self-centered; they are capable of prosocial behavior that seeks to help others. According to this conclusion, even 3-year-olds in a preschool can behave prosocially, which relates to Piaget's (1970) idea of developmental stages and possible maturation within the child. Piaget suggested a decline in egocentric thought occurred as children exchanged information with others and learned to take a different perspective. Taking a different perspective is an important ability needed for prosocial behavior. Underwood and Moore (1982) computed meta-analyses of perspective taking and prosocial behavior. The researchers concluded that perspective taking was positively related to prosocial behavior.

Eisenberg-Berg and Neal (1979) spent 12 weeks observing spontaneous sharing, helping, and comforting behaviors of 26

48-to-63-month-old children in a preschool setting. The subjects were 25 white and 1 Asian-American, middle-class children (16 males and 10 females). A familiar female adult experimenter observed and questioned the children in their preschool classes for approximately 4 hours per week over a 12-week period. When researchers observed a prosocial act, they asked the child to explain the reason for behaving in such a way. The children often explained their behavior by referring to the needs of the other person. Other reasons for behaving prosocially included reasons of friendship, gaining approval, and mutual benefits for such behavior. Researchers categorized the children's responses into Kohlberg's stages of moral development. Since some researchers postulated that having an adult in the area being studied had an effect on the subjects, it is hard to determine if the students in this study acted naturally, the same way they would act if no adults were nearby. In a manner similar to Eisenberg-Berg and Neal (1979), this researcher also questioned the children as to why they behaved in such a (prosocial) way. These researchers used a methodology similar to the one used in this investigation, but they related their findings to Kohlberg's theory, rather than determining which activities promoted which prosocial behaviors.

To summarize, the research on prosocial development of children from 2 to 6 years of age shows that children have different ways of responding in different situations. The cited studies have suggested numerous conditions which would facilitate prosocial development. However, there seems to be a lack of research studies related to the influence of curricular contexts in the classroom which would more than likely provide opportunities for the development of prosocial behavior.

Organization of Prosocial Behavior Within the Personality of the Child

There are a range of mechanisms and psychological conditions presumed to undermine prosocial behavior. Among these are ego strength, empathy, guilt, anxiety, approval seeking, cost-benefit considerations, adherence to norms, and affective states (Mussen, 1983). Researchers generally have positively correlated social competence to prosocial behaviors. Bond and Phillips (1971), Hampson (1979), and Midlarsky and Bryan (1972) found that positive traits such as social responsibility and emotional stability are related to prosocial behaviors.

Researchers have also associated personality with prosocial behaviors in various research studies. Not all findings of prosocial behavior indicated evidence of positive social attributes. At times, children exhibit prosocial behavior as well as behaviors that are not strictly prosocial (e.g., assertive). The present study defined an attribute as being characteristic and a defined behavior as conduct--how one physically interacts with others. This researcher sought to investigate the kinds of prosocial behavior 5-year-olds exhibited during different curricular contexts while interacting with younger children, peers, and adults.

Learning to Act Prosocially

Observational learning is one of our most powerful socialization methods. Children often observe another person and then imitate that person. This process is referred to as "modeling." The child imitates the behavior of the "model" (Bandura, 1986). Children often imitate the behaviors of adults. Children assimilate social interaction, good manners, and polite behavior without the awareness of either the children or the adults involved. Kim and Stevens (1987) reviewed the research on prosocial behavior in young children and concluded that teachers can model acts of kindness, consideration, and generosity in an effort to nurture prosocial behavior.

Kohn (1990) discovered that teachers are able to model appropriate behavior and directly instruct children in such appropriate behavior. It could be that children with such positive adult influences behave even more prosocially, instead of less, because of the increased access to positive adult models who demonstrate prosocial behavior.

Bandura (1986) wrote that many of children's complex behaviors are due to exposure to competent models who demonstrate appropriate behavior in solving problems and coping with their world. The consequence of demonstrating the actual behavior may also provide reinforcement. For example, if the behavior is socially acceptable, the child may be welcomed by the group, which will reinforce the behavior, promoting the chance that it will be repeated. For example, in one preschool, children rarely spent time with picture books. When the adults in the classroom began to model reading in front of the children, there was an immediate and dramatic increase in the amount of time the children spent interacting with books during free choice time (Haskett & Lenfestey, 1974).

According to Bandura (1986), not just any person may serve as a model. The model shows the child a new pattern of behavior or thinking as the child observes and then imitates the model. The child must attend to what the model is saying or doing. Those individuals who are seen as warm, powerful, or atypical are much more likely to command attention by children than are cold, weak, typical individuals. If children follow the lead of an adult exhibiting prosocial behavior, it is likely that the adult was serving as a model due to personal characteristics the child found attractive.

Promoting Prosocial Behavior

Mussen and Eisenberg-Berg (1977) gave a lengthy list of suggestions for fostering prosocial behavior in children. The researcher looked for indicators of these behaviors in the data collected for the present study:

1. Be an example. Exhibit helping, cooperating, and sharing behavior. The teachers in the preschool being studied were reminded daily of the effect that their "modeling" behavior has on children's behavior.

2. Preach prosocial behavior. Take advantage of specific situations to instruct children how to share, how to be helpful, and how to cooperate. The teachers in this preschool often told children exactly how to help someone else as the opportunity arose.

3. Be warm and accepting. This is the stance the preschool strove to promote.

4. Set firm standards of behavior that have consequences when not followed. Children were reminded of rules, guided with firmness and concern, but removed from the group when necessary.

5. Provide role-playing opportunities for children and discuss how one's actions may affect another's feelings. The teachers often addressed feelings during small group time.

6. Provide activities that require cooperation, such as group projects. Many times, specific activities were planned to promote sharing materials or working with friends.

7. Suggest specific ways children can be cooperative and helpful. When appropriate, the teachers suggested ways to interact prosocially.

8. Praise prosocial behavior. The teachers smiled warmly, nodded their heads, and conveyed the idea that

prosocial behavior was desirable as they reinforced its occurrence.

Kohn (1991) promoted the idea of expecting children to follow a rule after its rationale has been explained. To increase prosocial behavior, Kohn recommended that, from preschool to high school, children should learn why--not merely be told that helping others is good. Kohn explained that how such explanations are framed is important:

1. The level of discourse should fit the child's ability to understand.

2. The concept of using reason does not preclude passion. Use an emotional charge to show that it matters.

3. Prosocial activity should not be promoted on the basis of self-interest.

Tegano and Parsons (1989) made the observation that the schedule can have an effect on children's play. Some children need time to "warm up" before they can interact with others. The authors suggest that teachers not force children to change play areas too often. This study leads to the question of whether some children need time to "warm up" to others before they can act prosocially.

During the present investigation, the researcher observed children during the different curricular contexts of center/activity time, snack time, and outdoor play time. These children were not forced to change play areas.

Prosocial Behavior in a Structured Setting

Many naturalistic investigations of prosocial behavior occurred in structured settings, such as daycare settings, preschool classrooms, and early elementary grades. Following is a description of studies that delved into some of the same questions this researcher sought to answer.

Floody (1978) conducted research on the ability to develop 3- and 4-year-old children's prosocial behavior through the education of the early childhood educator. After participating in a 2-hour seminar in which prosocial research findings, prosocial modeling, and role playing were discussed, the teachers kept written accounts of classroom interventions utilized as a result of the training. The experimental groups had more prosocial behavior than the control groups whose teachers did not receive the training. Floody concluded that "theory and experimental findings in prosocial development can be applied to the natural preschool setting with positive results" (p. 1). Although the present study was not a teacher training study, the teachers involved in this study were trained in the identification and recording of prosocial behavior. A detailed explanation is given in Chapter III.

Organization of Prosocial Behavior within a Mixed-Aged Grouping

Montessori (1964), the British Infant School (Dewey 1964), and Piaget's (1970) developmental theory all support the idea of mixed-age grouping.

Elkind (1987, 1989), Katz, Evangelou, and Hartman (1990), Martinello (1973), and Stanton (1973) recommended mixed-age grouping as a way to meet the individual, developmental needs of children. Stanton (1973) and Martinello (1973) stressed the value of children having the same teacher for more than one year, which provides a secure relationship as well as the opportunity for the teacher to know the children more fully. Elkind (1989) agreed that multi-age grouping is "the most effective way of addressing the natural variability of young children" (p. 49). He noted three advantages of this arrangement. First, younger, more advanced children can be grouped with older, slower students for certain activities. Second, the older children can tutor the younger children. This practice has been found to be mutually beneficial for both partners. Third, the teacher is attuned to the individual children and is able to move them ahead to appropriate activities.

A major reason for mixed-age grouping in the early years is to facilitate social development. Martinello (1973) found that older children in a mixed-age group were more responsible for looking after younger children. Brownell (1990) found that mixed-age pairs adjusted both the behavioral content and the complexity of their social behavior to development of the younger children in their interactions with them. The adjustments in social behavior were a function of both the subject's and the partner's age.

Stanton (1973) additionally reported the academic value to the older children as they assume a tutorial role with the younger children.

Mixed-aged grouping supports the socialization of young children (Allen & Feldman, 1976; Furman, Rahe, & Hartup, 1979; Shatz & Geiman, 1973; Suomi & Harlow, 1972). The presence of younger children can foster caretaking behaviors (Whiting & Whiting, 1975) and prosocial behaviors (Furman et al., 1979). In a mixed-age group the younger children are integrated with a more socially diverse peer group (Konner, 1975) and with older, more competent peers. In this way, younger children are potentially in a position to learn various social and cognitive skills through peer tutoring and through the observation and imitation of more competent behaviors.

Researchers have conducted investigations of prosocial behavior in mixed-age preschools. Howes and Rubenstein (1978) studied peer social behaviors and interaction in daycare centers and in family daycare homes in order to examine the influences of experience and environment. Small, mixed-age groups in family daycare facilitated language development. Bar-Tal, Raviv, and Goldberg (1982) also reported that helping others was frequent when they observed children in a nursery school setting. The researchers hypothesized that helping was a popular form of prosocial activity because it requires less personal sacrifice than do other forms (e.g., giving up a favorite toy) and that it may also serve a useful function in initiating and maintaining pleasant social interactions in a way that other prosocial behaviors do not.

The literature contains descriptions of two daycare centers that utilize mixed-age grouping: The Frank Porter Graham Center, housed at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill (Perspectives: A progress report on child care, 1970) and The Family Development Research Program and Daycare center of Syracuse University in New York (Honig, 1972). It is the belief of the center directors that there are several advantages associated with mixed-age grouping. In a mixed-age group there is potential for more varied educational experiences through reciprocal learning. Older children learn more when they help the younger ones. Younger children model after the older ones. Because mixed-age grouping is most like the situation in the home, this kind of center arrangement provided continuity in the children's lives.

Like the directors of the Frank Porter Graham Center, the directors of the Family Development Research Program noted positive benefits of mixed-age grouping. The family-style grouping "not only permits but almost requires a great deal of individual teacher responsibility and ingenuity" (p. 18). The teacher facilitates, arranges, models, offers new experiences, and encourages thinking and talking (Honig, 1972). The present study sought to discover the effect the preschool teachers had on prosocial behavior during interactions between children and adults in the three curricular contexts of the preschool setting.

Summary

To summarize the research previously conducted to investigate prosocial behavior, the researcher attempted to relate current theory to practice.

Corsaro (1985), Piaget (1959), and Vygotsky (1978) all emphasized the importance of children's activities, especially while interacting with others. Prior to this investigation no one had directly conducted research on children's activities to determine the kinds of prosocial behaviors that occur in different curricular contexts of the preschool setting.

Researchers report the occurrence of expressions of sympathy in preschool and prosocial behavior in young children. Boeck (reported by Stern, 1924) and Murphy (1937) found high levels of parental reports of sympathy in 2- to 6-year-old children. Kohn (1990) related the incidence of prosocial behavior to the mothers' parenting style. This research investigation looked not only at expressions of empathy (similar to sympathy) but also at sharing, helping, communication, proximity seeking, and leadership.

The prosocial behavior of young children has been studied in natural preschool settings. Researchers have observed and even questioned children about their prosocial behavior. Like Eisenberg-Berg and Neal (1979), this observational research investigation also included the component of questioning the children as to why they behaved in a prosocial manner.

Researchers report that the child's personality has an effect on subsequent prosocial behavior (Bond & Phillips, 1971; Hampson, 1979; Midlarsky & Bryan, 1972; Mussen, 1983). However, to date, no one has looked at the effect different curricular contexts can have on the prosocial behavior of young children. This research investigation sought to discern the different kinds of prosocial behavior that occur during different curricular contexts and between 5-year-olds and adults, peers, and younger children.

Children learn to act in a prosocial manner when an adult or a teacher models prosocial behavior (Bandura, 1986; Kim & Stevens, 1987). This research project investigated the prosocial behavior exhibited by children who attended a preschool where adults consistently modeled prosocial behavior.

Mussen and Eisenberg-Berg (1977) suggest ways to promote prosocial behavior in young children. Strategies the adults in their study used included being an example, preaching prosocial behavior, being warm and accepting, setting firm standards for behavior, providing role-playing opportunities, providing activities that require cooperation, suggesting specific ways children can be cooperative, and praising prosocial behavior. Kohn (1991) found explaining the rationale for rules was helpful for increasing prosocial behavior in young children. The effect different curricular contexts have on the prosocial behavior of young children was the focus of the present study.

One research study considered children's prosocial behavior in a structured setting. Radke-Yarrow and Zahn-Waxler (1976) examined preschool children during free play. The current research study also included center/activity time and snack time along with outdoor play time as curricular contexts in which prosocial activity occurs.

Researchers recommend mixed-age grouping for preschool-aged children (Elkind 1987, 1989; Katz, Evangelou, & Hartman, 1990; Martinello, 1973; Stanton, 1973). Social development is one advantage of mixed-age grouping according to Brownell (1990) and Martinello (1973). Previous investigations of mixed-age grouping did not focus on prosocial development in different curricular contexts, which led to the need for this research project. This researcher looked at developing prosocial behavior as a function of social development in a mixed-age preschool.

CHAPTER III
METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to investigate the prosocial behaviors of 5-year-old preschool children in a mixed-age college laboratory program in an attempt to answer two basic research questions. First, what kinds of prosocial behavior do 5-year-olds exhibit during center/activity time, snack time, and outdoor play time? Second, what kinds of prosocial behaviors do 5-year-olds exhibit when interacting with younger children, peers, and adults? A qualitative design allowed for insight, discovery, and interpretation of the naturally occurring prosocial behavior in young children.

The researcher developed a recording instrument for the collection of individual prosocial activity (Appendix A). The form had a place to note the child's identification code, age, and curricular contexts (center/activity time, snack time, or outdoor play time). The researcher recorded only prosocial interactions involving the targeted 5-year-olds and noted the other participants' status--either teachers, peers, or younger children. The researcher sorted the data into the three curricular contexts and by interactions with adults, peers, or younger children. The form highlighted the various types of interactions that occurred during the different curricular contexts and with different participants.

The purpose of this study was "to arrive at a comprehensive understanding of the group under study" and "to develop general theoretical statements about regularities in social structure and process" (Becker, 1968, p. 68). This researcher strove to investigate the children enrolled in this preschool program in order to determine how the children interacted prosocially in this environment. During the course of this study, the researcher observed nine 5-year-old children to see how they interacted with adults, peers, and younger children. The researcher noted prosocial behaviors and the circumstances surrounding them. If the researcher found certain conditions to precipitate prosocial behaviors on a regular basis, those conditions may have important implications for those who determine appropriate activities in early childhood programs.

In order to build on the considerable research base of prosocial behaviors in preschool children, Mussen (1983) recommended the use of

> descriptive data on the kinds of prosocial behavior that preschool children actually manifest, the circumstances in which prosocial behavior occurs, to whom it is directed, how help and generosity are sought, and the interactions that take place between the giver and receiver. Descriptive information on children throughout childhood is in short supply. (p. 529)

This research project involved field study (Merriam, 1988). It took place in the natural setting, a college preschool. It used participant observation (Bailey, 1982) and had very little structure imposed by the researcher, because the observations were limited to watching the children and interacting with them in the normal course of the regular daily activities. Nine of the 5-year-old children were observed as they interacted with others. Specific times of observation were center/activity time, snack time, and outdoor play time. The researcher documented all prosocial behaviors in the observational notes. The researcher was interested in the way certain different daily activities promoted prosocial behaviors in young children. Other data, including daily hour-long interviews with the teachers and support teachers and irregularly held interviews with parents, supplemented the 70-minute daily observations. Also, a form was given to all of the parents (Appendix B). The parents noted different events that dealt with prosocial behavior that their children described as having happened during the day.

Observing and Recording Field Observations

The researcher observed and recorded the prosocial behavior of children as they played at centers, had snacks, and played outside. The researcher strove to take notes inconspicuously, because Lofland (1971) warned, "Don't jot conspicuously" (p. 84). When subjects observe someone taking notes, it could have an effect on their behavior. The observer was in the lab setting twice a week for 3 hours and 3 days a week for 2 hours, at times when the children were present during a 15-week duration. The process of observing children's normal activities did not disturb the ongoing relationship between the researcher and work in the lab.

The researcher was guided by Lofland's (1971) suggestions for field observations:

1. Field notes were recorded as soon as possible after the observation.

2. The observer became disciplined in writing notes, realizing that it often takes as long to write the notes as it takes to do the actual observation.

3. Field notes included

    a. running descriptions,

    b. previous incidents that were recalled,

    c. analytical ideas and inferences,

    d. personal impressions and feelings, and

    e. notes for further information.

Participant Observation

Participant observation usually involves the researcher observing what people do, listening to what people say, and participating in their activities, whenever possible. It typically requires that the researcher be "in the presence of others on an ongoing basis and have some nominal status for them as someone who is part of their daily lives" (Schwartz & Jacobs, 1979, p. 50). It is important that the researcher study the behaviors and interactions that occur naturally in the setting. The purpose is for the researcher to be able to describe the observed setting in great detail. Also important are the activities that took place in the setting, the participants and the meaning(s) of the activities and setting as perceived by the people being observed (Stainback & Stainback, 1984). The researcher observed the nine targeted 5-year-olds from the green group 5 days a week for slightly over an hour a day (70 minutes) for 15 weeks, a total of 87 hours.

Naturalistic Observations

The researcher used observation as the primary mode of researching prosocial behaviors of the identified preschool children as she studied children's play in the fairly spontaneous preschool lab within the daily routine rather than under conditions too meticulously controlled (Bott, 1928; Brofenbrenner, 1979).

The researcher decided to observe the children during three different curricular contexts: center/activity time, snack time, and outdoor play time after a telephone interview with Dr. Lillian Katz, the Director of the ERIC Clearinghouse for Educational Research. Dr. Katz agreed with the researcher's finding that no researcher to date had investigated the incidence of prosocial behavior during different curricular contexts of the preschool day.

The College Preschool as Observation Site

One college laboratory preschool was selected for this study. Lofland (1971) suggested that desired information is more accessible when the researcher is able to use "pre-existing relations of trust as a route into the setting, rather than going in cold" (p. 95). The college that operated this mixed-age laboratory preschool employed this researcher, and, for that reason, she chose this particular preschool setting. The researcher's presence in the lab each day was not a distraction during the previous academic year when she was in the preschool daily as part of her teaching responsibilities.

Gaining Entry to the Site

After deciding to use the college preschool for research purposes, the researcher discussed the proposed study with the center's director, a fellow faculty member. The researcher explained the proposed project and requested permission to use the preschool for observational purposes. During this meeting the researcher described her role during actual observation times. Most of the researchers' time would be spent unobtrusively taking notes. The director listened and responded excitedly during the meeting. She expressed great delight in having the college preschool center chosen for doctoral research and promised to help in every way possible. Because the center usually followed the college calendar and closed at the end of April, special accommodation was given by the Dean to offer college students early childhood course credit and "mentor" hours for participating in the operation of the preschool during the May and June extension. All of the registered children were attending during May and June. The parents were very enthusiastic about the extension of the program. The teachers and support teachers were the same undergraduate early childhood majors who had worked in the lab during the previous two semesters. The preschool director was careful to insure that the extended program was run exactly as it had during the past year. There was no break in the schedule as the lab operated during final examination week in April and through June. It was expected that observations made at this time would be typical of the normally observed interactions during the previous 8 months.

The parents of the children enrolled in the preschool gave permission for their children to be observed as a standard policy of enrollment in the program (see letter in Appendix C). The researcher received official approval from the University's Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects.

Subjects

The subjects in this study were members of the above-mentioned preschool in the laboratory school at

Florida Southern College in Lakeland, Florida. The entire preschool membership was composed of 20 boys (1 Hispanic, 1 African-American, and 18 white) and 19 girls (1 Hispanic, 1 African-American, and 17 white) from all three levels of socioeconomic status (8 low income, 25 middle income, and 6 high income). The ages of the children ranged from 3 years 3 months, to 5 years 3 months. The children were distributed as equally as possible by age and sex into three groups (known as red, green, and yellow). This preschool may not have been representative of typical preschools in the state of Florida. The program followed the schedule of the college with extended breaks at Christmas and did not typically operate between May and September. The program met for 3 hours a day and transportation was not furnished. Because of these limited services, not all families were able to choose this preschool for their young children. Three-year-old children were enrolled on their birthday, and open enrollment was available as long as space permitted.

The children were, in general, rather sophisticated in the routine of the daily program since they had been in attendance for over 90 school days before the study began. Most of the center activities were limited to six children participating at one time. The children were adept at controlling the number of participants at a given center. They understood the clothespins, contracts, and bell ringing to signal the end of center/activity time. They were also very aware of the normal daily schedule which was consistently adhered to.

Selection of the Sample and Grouping

The sample was composed of nine 5-year-old preschool children, five girls and four boys who were members of a group of 14 children. The researcher chose these children for study because they were the 5-year-old children who were in the (green) group the researcher observed during a previous semester. The researcher observed the subjects during center/activity time, snack time, and outdoor play time. The green group was used for a related pilot study during the first semester of preschool. During this time, the researcher officially observed the group twice a week for 3 hours a day, as part of her regular teaching duties. Field notes, teacher anecdotal notes, and teacher interviews were conducted in an effort to establish the presence of prosocial behavior among the group participants.

Procedure for Observation

The researcher observed the children for approximately 1 hour and 10 minutes daily from mid-March through June. Exact times of observation were as follows:

1:15-1:50	Center/Activity time
2:30-2:50	Snack time
2:50-3:05	Play time

Observations of the children encompassed the entire time the lab was in operation, as either the researcher or the teaching staff were documenting prosocial behavior as it occurred.

The researcher met with the entire preschool staff daily for 1 hour after the children were dismissed. The intent of the "debriefing" meeting was for the staff members to either corroborate or dispute the prosocial behavior observations reported by the researcher. In order to ensure that all staff members were actively observing the exhibited prosocial behaviors, each was given a clipboard and 2"x3" blank white labels with the individual children's names listed. Any prosocial behavior observed by a teacher or a support teacher during the normal course of her interactions with children was written on the label with the appropriate child's name. The teachers recorded prosocial behaviors that occurred at the center they were assigned to during center/activity time. In this way all of the staff members made contributions during the daily meetings. The researcher discussed each of her observations and asked the other group members for input regarding those observations. For example, "Albert was sharing the hole punch with Alexandra during center/activity time. Did anyone else notice the two of them sharing things?" This also helped to make the staff members who were not directly involved with the green group (the group being studied) feel like they were a part of the research investigation.

During the duration of the study, the researcher observed the children for over 87 hours, an amount of time considered reasonable for a single classroom setting (Brophy, 1979). The researcher was in the lab the entire time the preschool was open, but only focused her written observations on the three different curricular contexts of center/activity time, snack time, and outdoor play time.

The researcher circulated around the room as unobtrusively as possible. One-way observation mirrors overlooked the activity area for covert observations. The researcher took field notes as recommended by Lofland (1971).

The researcher endeavored to have a minimal effect on the studied behaviors. The researcher selected a research setting in which she was already a commonplace observer. She had spent two college semesters observing college students in the preschool as part of her academic teaching responsibilities. The researcher spent a minimum of 87 hours in the field observing a group of nine children who were 5 years old. She compared data from various sources. The researcher also interviewed, formally and informally, students, parents, support teachers, teachers, and the resident teacher, as well as the faculty member who served as the preschool director.

The researcher asked the teachers about what they had been noticing in the preschool. In one of the hour-long debriefings after the children had been dismissed, the researcher asked,

> "Has anyone noticed anything especially prosocial about any of the children in the green group?"

The following responses were shared by the participants:

> "Charlotte is still 'mothering' Scarlett. She helps her, waits for her, and encourages her."

> "The green group is talking about getting married. One of the teachers is engaged. Willie's uncle is engaged, too. The kinds continually propose to each other."

> "Charlie seems to be most prosocial with adults, not kids."

> "Albert is prosocial even when no one else is. He always greets the other children at a center."

The researcher realized the effect of observer bias on data collection. For this reason the researcher was careful to articulate personal biases and prejudices in order that they not have a distorting effect on the data collected. The researcher taught the support teachers and teachers how to gather anecdotal accounts of prosocial behavior during a training session provided to all early childhood students. After a lecture detailing prosocial behavior and how to identify it, students practiced recording their observations. All of the teachers were looking for specific behaviors (Beaty, 1986). Care was taken to insure that all students were able to suitably record their observations. The students received training in a form of systematic observation as well as remediation for any student unable to discriminate prosocial behavior. In this way, student teachers could gather data during those times that prosocial behavior occurred and the researcher was not able to directly observe it, such as when the researcher was observing other children in other areas of the classroom.

The researcher was looking for evidence of the following prosocial behaviors taken from the Child Skills Checklist (Beaty, 1986):

Prosocial Behavior Checklist

*Shows concern for someone in distress
*Shows delight for someone experiencing pleasure
*Shares something with another
*Gives something of his/her own to another
*Takes turns with toys or activities
*Waits for turn without a fuss
*Helps another do a task
*Helps another in need

Description of the Site

In order for the reader to understand the physical characteristics of this specific preschool, the researcher will now describe the preschool in detail. The preschool used in this study was approximately 75' x 100'. The total area accessible to the children was approximately 49' x 63'. There were three separate areas for interaction. The individual areas were approximately 25' x 32'. The entire preschool classroom had activity centers on all of the peripheral walls: the reading corner, the listening center, the writing center, the art center, mailboxes, puzzles, tools and woodworking, science, puppets, grocery store, musical instruments, blocks, housekeeping, table toys, and manipulatives. A diagram of the preschool floor plan appears in Appendix D.

There was an adult rocking chair in each of the three color group areas usually used by the group's teacher while directing group activities. The reading corner contained a couch, large pillows, a park bench, and a wide selection of children's literature. Teacher and child produced books were available, as well as commercial books.

The listening center had a low table with chairs, a cassette player and tapes with sets of matching books. The cassette tapes had both teacher and commercially prepared recordings.

The writing center had a table with four chairs. A nearby bookcase shelved paper of assorted colors, textures and sizes, envelopes, pencils, markers, stickers, templates, chalkboards, small dry-erase boards, and dry-erase markers.

The art center had two sinks, six standing easels, and a table for working. A large tarp which was secured to the floor by duct tape on all four sides protected the floor. There were numerous art supplies including tempera paints, water colors, crayons, modeling clay, markers, colored chalk, construction paper, glue sticks, and scissors.

Having labeled the mailboxes with the names of all the children, the teachers, and the college staff members, the director encouraged the children and staff to "write" to each other.

The puzzle area had a low table and three shelves of puzzles varying in the number of pieces and complexity. The puzzles that did not have wooden trays had carpet squares on which to assemble the puzzles.

The tools and woodworking area had a wooden work bench for working and storage of materials. In a drawer were four hammers. Nails were in a bucket under the work bench. The children pounded the nails into wood pieces using bottle caps and other scrap materials as they created imaginary items. This was a very popular center.

The science center had an aquarium, plants, magnets, sand timers, kaleidoscopes, auditory perception games, etc. A table was next to the bookshelf. Children selected materials from the center and used them on the table.

The puppet center had a stage, dozens of puppets, and a small audience area. The children presented shows and programs.

The grocery store had a cash register, play money, and shelves filled with empty food packages. There were baskets, bags, coupons, and a shopping cart. The children often took food items over to the housekeeping area.

Musical instruments were set out on a table. There were drums, an autoharp, electric keyboard, and tambourines.

The block center had two shelving units filled with blocks. There were approximately 500 blocks. The area was about 12' x 12'. Toy farm animals, cars, boats, and airplanes were also available for playing with in the block center.

The housekeeping center had men's and women's clothing for dress up play. This area housed an armoire, a wooden kitchen set, a table and chairs, a telephone, an ironing board, stove, sink, refrigerator, rocking chairs, high chair, dressers, and cribs.

The table toys areas had low, open shelves with play materials for free use. The shelves had labels so children could return the toys to the proper place. See-through unbreakable plastic containers stored toys with smaller parts.

Low, open shelves housed the manipulatives. Also stored in this area were materials such as pegboards, beads to string, construction sets, things for children to count, things for children to compare, cause and effect materials, toys with open-ended possibilities, and toys of various textures.

The outside play area was accessible by the front door and two French doors between the science center and the puppet corner. The playground had a chain link fence with two gates. There was a cement sidewalk for riding tricycles. There were two teeter-totters, a covered sandbox, a log cabin fort, and a multi-use climber with swings. The children used all of the inside and outside areas regularly during the planned program.

The Preschool Director described the philosophy of the preschool laboratory as incorporating Piaget's cognitive interactionist or constructivist theory. The director defined the Piagetian cognitive developmental focus by explaining that all activities were "hands on" throughout the curriculum. The director believed that children created knowledge through their interactions with the environment. Children were not passive receivers of knowledge but rather actively worked at organizing their experiences into more complex structures. There were no worksheets or workbooks used. The director designed the curriculum for children to be actively engaged with those aspects of the environment that intrigued him or her. It was the teacher's observations of children's behavior and language that provided the cues regarding what further explanations or materials were needed to extend understandings. It should be noted that this preschool was a very enriched environment. Any materials that could enhance the program were purchased for the preschool. The preschool did not have to pay teacher salaries so the director had more freedom to purchase materials and supplies, since the college supported the preschool. Another difference was that in this preschool two college professors directed the program and college students served as teachers and support teachers. Since no one at the preschool was paid by the preschool fees generated, the attitude about working there may have been different from the hourly paid employees in other preschools. With the two college professors constantly serving as models to both the college students and the preschoolers, prosocial attitudes may have been promoted more in this preschool than other preschool centers.

The children who attended the preschool were in three different mixed-age, heterogenous groups, identified by the colors red, yellow, and green. Each day there was a different teacher and support teacher. The teacher was a college student currently enrolled in part three of the three-part early childhood course sequence. The support teacher was a college student currently enrolled in part two of the same three-part early childhood course sequence. All of the teachers had previously served in the capacity of a support teacher. The duties of a support teacher were similar to that of a public school aide or paraprofessional. During center/activity time the teachers and support teachers were always present, as was the resident teacher who oversaw planning and room set up. The resident teacher was certificated in early childhood/elementary education/

special education and held a Bachelor's degree in elementary education. Usually an early childhood faculty member was also in attendance, facilitating a smooth daily operation.

During center/activity time free choice was available while the teachers from the three groups worked with small groups of three or four children who had contracts. Teachers gave a contract to children who were 4 or 5 years of age and who were ready for more structured activities. The contract listed (with words and symbols or pictures) four different centers for the child to visit. Teachers did not stress the order of visitation. After working at a particular center, the child had his or her contract "stamped" by the support teacher who facilitated that center. As the younger children watched the older children use contracts, occasionally a younger child also asked for one. Teachers accommodated children's requests for a contract, but the researcher noted that the children often lost interest after a couple of days if they were not really ready to handle a contract. However, if a younger child asked to have the same contract as an older friend, often the child was happy and was able to keep up with the additional structure. After working at all of the prescribed centers, the child was free to visit any centers he or she chose. Children without contracts went to any center they chose, provided there was room for them. Crowding was controlled by a predetermined number of colored clothespins at the center. As long as there was an unused clothespin at that center, a child could work there. The teachers fastened the clothespins to the child's clothes while working in the center. In this way, wandering children were directed back to their appropriate center.

When the entire center/activity time was over, the resident teacher would ring a hand-held bell. At this time the children returned to their color group area (red, yellow, or green) for journal writing.

After returning to the group, the children discussed the day's journal topic. The journals had daily questions to be answered that reflected the week's theme. In each group, an adult led the children to two tables where they "wrote" in their journals. There was either a teacher or a support teacher at each table. When the children had finished with their journals, they returned to sit in their color group area. The children seated themselves in chairs arranged in a semicircle and waited for the teacher to call them to the front of the group one at a time to share their journal entries with the rest of their group.

After they shared their journals, the children returned to the tables where they were served and shared a snack family-style. The snack and juice were on the table. The children passed the containers around the table until everyone had been served. The children served themselves and poured their own juice. The children helped to set the table and clean up when snack time was over. The children often participated in simple food preparation, usually during center/activity time and often in the science center/discovery area.

After snack time the children had outdoor play time. A teacher and a support teacher supervised each group while the children played.

After outdoor play time, the groups reconvened at their regular area. For the next 15 minutes the support teacher read to the group while the teacher wrote comments on the contracts used that day.

After the story time was over, the children checked their mailboxes for messages and retrieved their belongings from their cubbies. At this time the children were dismissed to the playground where they sat on a low bench and waited to be called to the car lineup circle.

While the teachers supervised the children at pick-up, the support teachers went back into the room to clean up and prepare for the next day. At this time the support teachers finished documenting their prosocial observations and then began to place the actual stickers on the children's individual anecdotal folders.

After all of the children had left, the teachers returned to the room and met with the researcher who led the discussion of the day's activities. There was an hour-long "debriefing" during which everyone present elaborated on the prosocial behavior they had observed. During the day, the teachers made anecdotal notes on stickers with preprinted names and then adhered them to the individual children's folders during the debriefing meeting. This encouraged on-going observation on the part of the teachers and the support teachers. The researcher also used an interview log in which she recorded as fully as possible all of the prosocial interactions reported on that particular day.

Research Methods and Procedures

Overview

Using a qualitative and naturalistic approach, the researcher explored the prosocial behaviors of 5-year-olds while interacting with peers, younger children, and adults during three curricular contexts.

Collecting Data

The researcher's objective was to discover and describe evidence of prosocial behaviors demonstrated by 5-year-old children as they interacted with other people. The researcher observed nine children who were 5 years old as they interacted with others in three different curricular contexts: center/activity time, snack time, and outdoor play time. The children observed included four white boys, four white girls, and one African-American girl.

The researcher adhered to the recommendations of Dobbert (1982) regarding participant observations as she (a) kept detailed records of everything that happened, no matter how mundane, (b) periodically detached herself from the situation and reviewed all records from a neutral social scientist's point of view, and (c) continually monitored observations and records for evidence of personal bias.

During the course of this research project, the researcher strove to maintain a posture of what Spradley (1980) called "moderate participation" (p. 59). In this case, the researcher maintained a balance between being an insider and an outsider. The researcher had observed this particular group for two full semesters. The children were accustomed to the presence of the researcher and did not seem to be distracted by her. Prior to beginning this study, the researcher spent one week at another preschool doing a small pilot study. The intent was to determine how effective the observational field notes would be. From this experience the researcher determined the usefulness of the data collection form, how distractible it was to take notes in an active classroom, and how adults responded to an observer in the classroom. After observing the preschool class, the researcher decided that the form needed to have all of the participants' identification codes at the top of the document, all of the activity centers (blocks, arts, reading, etc.) and whether the interaction was with adults, peers, or younger children. This made coding more efficient and data sorting easier (Appendix A).

Participant Observer

Observations. The type of researcher participation for this research project was passive according to Spradley, (1980), who wrote, "The enthnographer engaged in passive participation is present at the scene of action but does not participate or interact with other people to any great extent" (p. 59). The researcher utilized the majority of time spent in the lab for detailed note-taking and for asking questions of the 5-year-olds studied. Observations of the three curricular contexts made on a daily basis over a period of 15 weeks gave a fairly accurate depiction of the natural occurrences in the preschool program.

The researcher wrote individual reports of prosocial behavior. She noted the date, curricular context, center/activity if appropriate, names of participants, and age category (adult, peer, or younger). Exact quotations of the children's conversations were written as accurately as possible. Any nonverbal interactions (smiles, winks, hugs, holding hands) observed by the researcher were also documented.

Interviews. The researcher conducted informal interviews (Spradley, 1979) as she asked the children, teachers, and support teachers questions during participant observation segments. The researcher did not determine these questions in advance, but they surfaced during scheduled observations. Informal interviews also occurred while parents were dropping off or picking up their children. Scheduled interviews occurred daily in the hour long debriefing held in the preschool. The center director, resident teacher, teachers, and support teachers attended these meetings. At this time all adults present discussed the day's happenings and noted prosocial behaviors observed.

Unobtrusive measures. It is possible that the presence of a researcher could affect the situation being studied. Unobtrusive measures are "measures that do not require the cooperation of a [subject] and that do not themselves contaminate the [data]" (Webb, Campbell, Schwartz, & Sechrest, 1966, p. 2). Unobtrusive measures are believed to lessen the chance that the observer's presence could possibly change the setting being observed (Schwartz & Jacobs, 1979). The specific nature of unobtrusive measures included the inspection of documents and anecdotal records which were part of each child's cumulative enrollment records.

Document Analysis

The researcher analyzed documents including the children's preschool enrollment records. Locked in the director's office were individual folders which included such information as health records, personal history, developmental checklists, social development, interests, family data, and parents' occupations. The information in these records, which was not available for direct observation by the researcher, was of benefit in adding to the researcher's observations. The researcher also examined folders containing daily anecdotal records that described the teachers' observation of individual children.

In an effort to combine participant observation, interviewing and document analysis, the researcher used "triangulation." According to Hammersley and Atkinson (1983), "Triangulation is not the combination of different kinds of data *per se*, but rather an attempt to relate different sorts of data" (p. 199).

This methodological triangulation involved the convergence of data from multiple data collection procedures. In an attempt to gain an understanding of 5-year-old children's prosocial behaviors directed toward adults, peers, and younger children, the researcher utilized participation observation, informal interviews, and document analysis. In addition to daily observation of the nine targeted subjects, information collected included parent comments either in person or part of written communications to the school, telephone conversations, and results from a parent survey. The observer also looked for evidence of nonverbal prosocial interactions. Information gleaned from the weekly meeting with the faculty and staff members was also considered in the analysis of data.

The researcher addressed the problem of trying to observe and record all events related to the prosocial behaviors of 5-year-olds in several ways. First, observations conducted 5 times a week for 15 weeks allowed a thorough description of relevant behaviors as they occurred naturally. Another trained observer also collected data. The observer and the researcher observed the same children at the same time once a week to confirm observer reliability. Second, the resident teacher, the preschool director and all of the college students working in the lab served as informants, as they were informally interviewed daily during the 1 hour "debriefing" meeting. The informants made the researcher aware of events she had not directly observed. Third, questioning the children as they interacted led to the discovery of their personal thoughts which would have otherwise been unavailable. Likewise, informal conversations with parents who were dropping off or picking up their child provided insight into the child's prosocial behavior in situations other than at school. Parents were also given a form on which to report any comments their child had made regarding other children at the preschool (Appendix B). Fourth, the use of data inspection and the review of individual children's anecdotal observation folders enhanced the researchers understanding of the phenomena under investigation.

According to Patton (1980), a comprehensive fieldwork endeavor rarely involves a single method or technique. Used in isolation, observations, interviews, and document analysis may not always provide an in-depth and thorough understanding. However, using such data collection procedures in concert the researcher can "build on the strengths of each type of data collection while minimizing the weaknesses in any single approach" (p. 158).

Along with detailed, exact accounts of observed behavior and conversations, the researcher included subjective comments and personal reflections in brackets. While continually confronting personal biases, she hoped that the biases were minimized. Qualitative research is, however, by nature value bound. The values of the researcher influence research when the problem to be investigated is selected. The research is further affected by the researcher's biases when developing questions to be answered, selecting measuring instruments, and analyzing and interpreting data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Schwartz and Schwartz (1969) pointed out the assumptions and conditions of the active monitoring of researcher bias, "Bias is a universal phenomenon; . . . the observer can and does know what his biases are; and that, knowing what they are, he can, by specifying them prevent distortions of his observations" (p. 103). The researcher met the three conditions that must be met in order that the personal bias of the researcher not distort findings in the observations (Schwartz & Schwartz, 1969):

1. The researcher should look for her own biases.

2. Upon finding a personal bias, she will explore its meaning and ramifications.

3. The researcher realizes that the discovery of biases is a continuous process.

The researcher's biases evolved as a result of her experiences as a public school student, a teacher, an advanced graduate student specializing in early childhood and parent education and her work with inservice and preservice teachers. Because these experiences are related to the researcher's preparation for conducting the study, they appear in the section on researcher qualifications and biases.

Recording Method

In addition to collecting already existing materials such as student enrollment records and daily anecdotal observation records, the researcher recorded data. Field notes provided the majority of data recorded during this study. Field notes are a written record of what the researcher has seen and heard in the field. Also included were the feelings, reactions, and thoughts of the researcher, although these comments were bracketed for ease of transcribing. Taylor and Bogdan (1984) explained the use of field notes:

> Descriptions of people, events, and conversations as well as the observer's actions, feelings, and hunches or working hypotheses. The sequence and duration of events and conversations are noted as

> precisely as possible. The fabric of the setting is described in detail. In short, the field notes represent an attempt to record on paper everything that can possibly be recalled. (p. 53)

The field notes collected during the course of this research served as a personal log that helped the researcher to keep track of the development of the investigation and to remain self-conscious of how the researcher has influenced the research. Dobbert (1982) recommended that researchers "never sleep on unamplified material. Full notes should always be written up before the end of the day" (p. 253).

The actual field notes included a detailed description of all prosocial behaviors that occurred while in the research setting as well as when and where it occurred. Basic information such as the date, place, and time of the events was recorded along with who was present and a description of participants. The researcher described the physical setting, occurring social interactions, and the activities the children were engaged in. The researcher noted when she was actively involved with the children being observed.

Some researchers have recommended placing reflective data in a separate section of the field notes (Denzin, 1978), while others believe a totally separate journal more appropriate (Spradley, 1980). The researcher included feelings, reactions, insights, and possible interpretations of occurring events as they transpired during the writing of detailed field notes. The researcher bracketed any fears, confusions, mistakes, or problems that developed along with speculations, flashes of intuition, or impressions. Although the researcher's interpretive comments may prove essential in data analysis, the primary concern was the concrete, precise, verbatim accounts of what people said and did (LeCompte & Goetz, 1982; Lofland, 1971). Although interpretive comments are necessary, it is "those enthnographies rich in primary data that are considered the most credible" (LeCompte & Goetz, 1982, p. 32).

Sample Field Notes

> Discovery Center Thursday, June 11
>
> Albert helped Amanda F. empty the hole puncher. No one else was at the table. The teacher was helping a 4-year-old tie his shoes.
>
> When the bell rang, Charlotte was cleaning the paper dots under the table. No one helped her. She asked why everyone was being mean to her.
>
> (I wonder if the 5-year-old girls like to play with Albert because he is mature and on their level. This is purely speculation.)

The researcher collected data during the course of this study on a clipboard using individual pages as needed. Pages were numbered in chronological order, filed, and coded. If the children created written messages as part of prosocial interactions, the researcher made xerox copies. There was a xerox machine available in the office of the preschool director.

Field notes, transcribed interviews, anecdotal observations made by the teachers, and the research log served as written records collected in this study. They provided the substance for ongoing data analysis and were collected in a large binder during the period of data collection.

Data Analysis

Data analysis is critical to the qualitative research process. An ongoing activity, it occurs throughout the investigative process. Bogdan and Biklen (1982) suggested that "first the data collection and organization, then the analysis, more data collection and organization, and then more analysis and so on--until the research is completed" (p. 42). The ongoing nature of this research design allowed its direction to be influenced by the data as it was gathered from the field.

While in the field, the researcher developed impressions and began to see relationships, patterns, likenesses, and differences in various aspects of the data. This was the most basic stage of data analysis. The next step occurred when the researcher was able to organize and develop the field-collected data as she expanded condensed field notes into detailed field notes on a daily basis.

During the entire research project, the researcher endeavored to carefully read, study, and reread all of the various data collected. During this time the researcher attempted to discern "similarities, differences, correspondence, categories, themes, concepts, and ideas and analyzes the logic of previous analytic outcomes, categorical organization, and weaknesses or gaps, in the data that require attention" (Stainback & Stainback, 1984, p. 405). This analytical inspection of the data provided the researcher the opportunity to utilize a form of evaluation analysis that Dobbert (1982) considered to be one of the most overlooked yet critical procedures in the analytic process. This evaluation analysis involved the identification of inadequate field notes and data analysis that needed upgrading. While studying the qualitative data it was important to constantly look for omissions, insights, mistakes, or problems in logic. It was still possible, at that point, to determine further work to be done in the field and any further analysis that was still needed.

The goal of the researcher was to gradually, throughout analysis, generate assertions. These assertions arose from the emerging hunches, flashes of intuition, concepts, ideas, and hypotheses. The researcher formed assertions in the shape of key statements that both positively and clearly affirmed what the researcher had discovered or believed, based on the merits of the analyzed data. According to Erikson (1986), "One basic task of data analysis is to generate assertions" (p. 147).

After making the assertions, the researcher conducted a systematic search of all of the data. At this time, she directed attention toward the discovery of disconfirming and confirming evidence. She modified assertions as necessary during this stage of analysis. Erickson (1986) recommended the following questions which the researcher incorporated into this study:

1. Is there too little evidence to warrant the assertion(s) made? The planned daily observations and debriefing meetings along with weekly staff meetings helped assure that enough evidence could be gathered.

2. Is there a range of evidence across different kinds of sources (e.g. direct observation, interviewing, site documents) to warrant the assertions? The design of this research project includes direct observation, teacher and child interviews, and document analysis (student cumulative records).

3. Were there additional subjects and/or settings or times of the day or week that, if studied, might have provided additional evidence? One of the preexisting groups of preschool children was the focus of this investigation. During the daily debriefing meetings, the teachers shared observations of prosocial behavior that occurred in the other two groups.

4. Did I spend enough time in the field to understand the complexity of the data related to the assertion(s)? This researcher spent 4 months in the preschool setting selected for this research investigation and acknowledges

that a preschool environment is very complex, with literally thousands of interactions occurring daily.

5. As hypotheses were developed and assertions made, did I search for disconfirming evidence while in the field? This researcher made an effort to ascertain any instances in which opposing evidence occurred.

6. Is there any contradictory evidence that would point to the need to modify or discard the assertion(s) made? During the daily debriefing meetings, the researcher often posed questions of the participating teachers, using a "devil's advocate" stance. This researcher made a concerted effort to point out any occasions observed which would not "fit" with the observed "prosocial" behavior.

7. Have I been careful not to discard too quickly any assertions that only needed to be modified or for which additional data might confirm their plausibility? The researcher was careful to continually look for data that related to her assertions.

LeCompte and Goetz (1982) recommended that after the initial analysis of data additional analyses are recommended in an effort to further strengthen the credibility of the findings. This was the time when the researcher had the chance to break away from the intensive data collection and analysis and achieve a distance from which a fresh perspective could be brought to the process of analysis. Scriven (1974) suggested the researcher return to the data after a month or longer hiatus from the research. Another suggestion utilized during the course of this investigation was submitting the findings to other professionals for their reaction. This submission occurred during weekly meetings held by the early childhood department faculty. The researcher, the resident teacher, and the other early childhood faculty member attended the meetings. These meetings provided a weekly forum for peer review while still collecting data. This was done on a systematic basis. Every Wednesday at 10:10 a.m. there was an hour-long meeting organized to discuss the current status of the research under investigation.

All of the preschool staff members were primary education majors working towards state certification. Before implementing the actual research project, the researcher conducted a pilot study in which she collected data on a daily basis. During this pilot study, the researcher met with the staff on a weekly basis. During this time, the prosocial behavior the researcher was looking at was defined, explained, and demonstrated. Various scenarios involving prosocial behavior were shared so that the staff members could identify the occurrence of prosocial behavior as it happened in the preschool setting.

Every day the preschool staff members collected anecdotal reports of prosocial behavior that occurred in each of the three groups. The researcher discussed all entries during the debriefing meeting as the teachers placed them in the children's individual cumulative records. During this time, the researcher posed and answered questions. The researcher continually clarified and explained the intent of the research project to staff members as individual questions and concerns arose.

Stainback and Stainback (1984) gave a number of suggestions for the organization and analysis of qualitative data:

1. Consider the context in which data were collected (hour, day, month). The researcher strove to remember that context was more than time.

2. Look for patterns, categories, concepts or themes in the data. Consider words, phrases, patterns of behavior, ideas, insights, and flashes of intuition that tend to reappear in the data.

3. Develop and continually revise classification schemes. What parts of the data seem to fit together? This helps organize the data which leads to a better understanding of the phenomena.

4. Consider the participants' perceptions while gathering data and how they categorize and classify the phenomena.

5. Determine similarities and relationships in various pieces of the data and compare and contrast consistently occurring themes and categories helps the researcher to

develop concepts, hypotheses, generalizations and possible theories.

6. Consider all data, whether or not it tends to support the emerging theme or idea. Be sure your ideas fit the data. Do not try to force the data to fit your ideas.

7. Record the impressions, interpretations, assertions, and conclusions drawn from the data as well as a clear description of the logical progression used in conducting analysis.

8. Seek commentary regarding the data from other researchers, mentors, and colleagues as an aid in clarifying and developing ideas, concepts, and hypotheses along with the review and careful study of the data from this investigation.

9. Speculate and formulate ideas, concepts, hypotheses, and assertions continuously. Do not be too cautious about forming ideas as long as the data are not forced to fit the ideas.

In this study, the researcher's goal was to discover how three different contexts, center/activity time, snack time, or outdoor play time lent themselves to prosocial interaction among 5-year-olds and younger children, peers, and adults. To achieve this goal, classroom observation, interviews, and document inspection took place. The task of the researcher in analyzing these data was likened to "putting a jigsaw puzzle together" (Smith & Geoffrey, 1968,

p. 15). The job of the researcher was to conduct a systematic search for order and understanding. This job was best achieved when following the recommendations of Bogdan and Biklen (1982) who proposed the researcher start by "working with data, organizing it, breaking it into manageable units, synthesizing it, searching for patterns, discovering what is important and what is to be learned, and deciding what you will tell others" (p. 145).

In an effort to efficiently analyze the data, the researcher utilized Spradley's (1980) model of data analysis. The researcher employed four phases of analysis during this ongoing search for patterns of behavior, phrases, and insights. The four phases of analysis follow:

1. The researcher identified categories of meaning. While reading the field notes, the researcher kept certain questions in mind. Spradley (1980) proposed nine different types of questions to use in order to classify seemingly unrelated events into categories.

   a. Are there kinds of things here?
   b. Are there places here?
   c. Are there parts of things here?
   d. Are there results of things here?
   e. Are there reasons for things?
   f. Are there uses for things?
   g. Are there ways to do things?

h. Are there stages of things?

i. Are there characteristics of things?

The researcher found the answers to these questions in the data. This process helped to suggest categories to be used in the organization of the data. Two of the domains included kinds of prosocial behavior and places where prosocial behavior were most likely to occur, but the researcher considered the other questions also.

2. The second phase of data analysis was taxonomic analysis. The researcher analyzed domains to determine organization. Relationships among the terms within the domain determined the organization of domains. This organization helped the researcher to relate domains to each other. The researcher fit together the domains identified in step one. For example, the domain "Kinds of Prosocial Behavior" could include prosocial behavior directed toward a 3-year-old or a 4-year-old or another 5-year-old as well as toward an adult.

3. The third phase involved searching for the characteristics of identified domains and the terms within domains. If there was inherent meaning in an object or an event, there were certain attributes regularly associated with it.

4. The fourth and final phase of data analysis involved searching for a theme that connected all of the identified pieces together. During this phase the

researcher looked for meanings that reoccurred across domains. For a theme to be deemed applicable it had to link several, though not all, domains.

Throughout this study, the researcher applied systematic analysis to the data that were collected and organized in an effort to discern categories of objects and events related to the prosocial behavior of 5-year-olds as they interacted with others (adults, peers, and younger children). Throughout the investigation, questions emerged which served to focus the researcher's attention during subsequent observations.

Researcher Qualifications and Biases

In qualitative research, the researcher is the primary instrument for data collection and analysis (Merriam, 1988). Because data are mediated through this human instrument, it is important to ascertain the qualifications and biases of the researcher. Appropriate qualifications have been identified by Wolcott (1976) as

1. sensitive and perceptive observer
2. sympathetic, skeptical, objective, and inordinately curious
3. physical stamina
4. emotional stability
5. personal flexibility
6. skills of a story-teller and writer
7. experience conducting fieldwork

The researcher has a varied educational background. Experiences that are related to Wolcott's proposed qualifications follow:

1. The researcher was a public school classroom teacher for 11 years, 3 years in a regular first grade class, 5 years in an exceptional education resource room (grades K-8), 1 year in a fourth grade Chapter I whole language class, and 2 years in a first grade Chapter I whole language class. She then spent 2 years as an education department faculty member at a small, private college, where she is now an assistant professor.

2. The researcher earned an M.Ed. and an Ed.S. in early childhood/curriculum and instruction.

3. The researcher completed coursework for an Ed.D. in curriculum and instruction, specializing in early childhood.

4. The researcher completed coursework that provided a theoretical and practical background in qualitative research.

5. The researcher conducted a qualitative study of the incidence of spontaneous singing in the first-grade whole language classroom. A report of the study was written and presented to a graduate research class at the University of Florida.

6. The researcher gained additional experience as an observer by supervising college interns and laboratory preschool teachers for two academic school years.

7. The researcher worked to improve her writing skills by writing short manuscripts for publication and preparing hand-outs for local and state conferences and workshops.

Wolcott (1976) maintained that the researcher, after having met the aforementioned qualifications, must come to terms with his or her own underlying assumptions and recognize the kinds of evidence he or she is most attracted to as she collects data in the field. Because of the potential impact the personal biases of the researcher on the data collected and the subsequent research outcomes, the following is a list of biases known by the researcher. This self-awareness of personal biases is shared with the hope that the reader now has a basis by which to evaluate the study (Ross, 1978).

1. The researcher believes all children express themselves behaviorally through imitation of other people around them.

2. The researcher believes that children act prosocially for different reasons and that the reasons may not always be the same as those perceived by the teacher.

3. The researcher believes different classroom activities will promote different kinds of interaction among children of differing ages.

Validity

The researcher incorporated Goetz and LeCompte's (1981) four contributing factors to insure internal validity in a qualitative study:

1. The common practice of "living" among participants and collecting data for long periods allows continual data analysis in an effort to refine constructs and ensure the match between scientific categories and participant reality. The researcher "lived" with the group for an entire academic year prior to beginning the actual study.

2. Informant interview was less abstract than many instruments used in other research designs. These interviews occurred daily during the debriefing held after dismissal.

3. Participant observation was conducted in the natural setting of the preschool lab, reflecting the real-life experiences of participants more accurately than would be possible in a contrived or scientific laboratory setting.

4. This analysis incorporated a process of researcher self-monitoring, known as disciplined subjectivity (Erikson, 1973). This exposed all phases of the research activity to constant questioning and reevaluation by the researcher.

Merriam (1988) suggested six basic strategies for ensuring internal validity in a qualitative research study.

The researcher incorporated five of these strategies into the present research.

1. Triangulation. Multiple sources of data were utilized. Included were field notes, anecdotal observations made by the teachers and support teachers, children's preschool records including child observation studies composed by the support teachers, and conversations held with parents while dropping off or picking up their children.

2. Member checks. The researcher took data and interpretations back to the adult participants and asked them if the results were plausible. Daily, during the scheduled debriefing (between 3:45-4:45 p.m.), all adults present discussed prosocial behaviors that were observed during the day's activities. In the event that a child demonstrated prosocial behavior for a reason other than to benefit another person, comments made by other adults in attendance shed light on the observed behavior, indicating whether or not it was indeed prosocial. The researcher did not consider children who helped others in order to achieve personal gain to be prosocial during this investigation.

3. Long-term observation at the research site for repeated observations. In this project, the researcher conducted observations daily for 15 weeks.

4. Peer examination. Adult participants who were employed by the preschool were involved in weekly meetings held to discuss all phases of research.

5. Researcher's biases. The researcher identified her biases at the onset of this research project.

Summary

The researcher designed this study to examine the use of prosocial behaviors by nine 5-year-old preschool children in a preschool setting. The intent of the researcher was to conduct a study that was both qualitative and naturalistic in nature.

While observing the subjects in three curricular contexts (center/activity time, snack time, and outdoor play time), the researcher found differences in both the quality and focus of the interactions. Different contexts may have promoted different outcomes. The researcher inspected the information gathered during observations for possible patterns. While collecting information, the researcher endeavored to continuously become more focused and uncovered new questions to focus on during subsequent observations.

CHAPTER IV
FINDINGS

During the spring of 1992, the researcher conducted a participant-observer study in which she observed nine 5-year-old children daily during center/activity time, snack time, and outdoor play time. During a 15-week period, she observed and recorded prosocial interactions. The researcher was interested in knowing the kinds of prosocial behaviors the 5-year-olds exhibited during observations. Also of interest were the kinds of interactions that took place with peers, younger children, and adults.

The researcher gave each family a questionnaire on which to report any indicators of prosocial behavior demonstrated by their child at home (Appendix B). The researcher asked the parents to write exact quotes from conversations in which their child talked about friends, friendships, playing together, etc. Of the 38 families (one family had two children attending the preschool) who received the reporting form, 22 families returned the form with written responses. All of the parents reported that their child(ren) talked about friends, playing together with friends, and liking school.

The researcher observed the interactions between the children and their parents or caregivers twice a day, as the children were dropped off or picked up. The researcher also observed the entire family at the annual family picnic sponsored by the preschool.

Once a week, on Fridays, (15 times total) the researcher informally asked the children why they behaved in a prosocial manner. If two children were painting together and were observed sharing the paints even though there were enough for both children to have their own set, the researcher asked, "Todd, since there are lots of paints here for you and Terri to use, why are the two of you using the same paints?"

For the duration of this study, the researcher situated herself close to the targeted 5-year-olds and waited to observe a prosocial interaction. When a prosocial interaction occurred, the researcher noted the date, whether the interaction occurred during center/activity, snack or outdoor play time, and circled the code names for the children involved. The interaction was described as completely as possible, and the participants were coded as being a peer, a younger child, or an adult (Appendix C).

The researcher used the daily interviews of the preschool teachers to validate the researcher's observations. The researcher talked about each of her observations with the entire preschool staff (10 adults). If the researcher missed, overlooked, or misinterpreted an observation, it was at this time that daily impressions were either agreed upon or corrected. This also helped to make the teachers in the other two groups feel involved. The teachers in the groups who were not being observed pointed out similar behaviors by their students. The group of preschool teachers agreed that the prosocial behaviors of the 5-year-olds in the green group were representative of all three groups.

Proponents of Head Start programs have pointed to the importance of children developing social competence, which has been defined by Waters and Sroufe (1983) as "an integrative concept which refers broadly to an ability to generate and coordinate flexible, adaptive responses to demands and to generate and capitalize on opportunities in the environment (i.e., effectiveness)" (p. 80). Waters and Sroufe (1983) defined competency as a construct when they proposed, "The competent individual is one who is able to make use of environmental and personal resources to achieve a good developmental outcome" (p. 81).

The purpose of this research was to determine the kinds of prosocial behaviors that occurred during different curricular contexts and among different people. In order to determine the conditions under which prosocial actions flourish, it was necessary to inspect the various occasions on which they were exhibited. It should be noted that the differences in kinds of prosocial behavior may fundamentally be developmental observations, but the curricular contexts provided opportunities for these behaviors.

Prosocial Behaviors Observed

Beaty (1986) defined prosocial behavior as having eight different forms. In the present study, the researcher expanded Beaty's (1986) definition of prosocial behavior to include 32 possible indicators of prosocial behavior. These indicators were apparent after careful analysis of the various types of prosocial interactions observed over a 15-week period. In an effort to ascertain categories of prosocial behavior, the researcher, along with two other education practitioners, organized the data into different kinds of interactions. The researcher made three xeroxed sets of the data. The three professionals then compared the three sets of data in an effort to discern similarities and differences in the way the data were sorted. Because the three sets of data were essentially sorted into the same seven broad categories, the categories determined were validated.

The three practitioners who sorted data separately were the researcher, another faculty member from the early childhood department, and an exceptional education teacher. An early childhood specialist performed an additional check when she went through all three sets of sorted data and double-checked the categories determined by the three analysts. Again, all checks showed the categories assigned to specific prosocial behavior were consistent. Triangulation of the data showed that the same categories were utilized by all three professionals and was member-checked by a fourth professional.

Prosocial Behavior Checklist

1. Shows concern for someone in distress
2. Shows delight for someone experiencing pleasure
3. Shares something with another
4. Gives something of his/her own to another
5. Takes turns with toys or activities
6. Waits for turn without a fuss
7. Helps another do a task
8. Helps another in need (Beaty, 1986).

Expanded Indicators of Prosocial Behavior

9. Seeks physical contact.
10. Compliments others.
11. Seeks proximity (Marriage).
12. Teaches how to do something.
13. Facilitates group.
14. Makes something for another.
15. Requests help (you must feel reasonably sure your request will be responded to in a positive manner in order to ask for help).
16. Responds to request (in a positive manner).
17. Facilitates play.
18. Makes positive comments.

19. Shows something to another.
20. Gives aid unknown to another.
21. Asks to see something of another.
22. Explains an idea to another.
23. Invites another to join.
24. Twosome (to be with a special friend).
25. Upset without friend/missing someone.
26. Asks to join others.
27. Seeks others to play with.
28. Offers help.
29. Engages positive nonverbal communication.
30. Self-corrects (When a child modifies his/her behavior to accommodate another person).
31. Plans prosocial activity.
32. Does something for another.

In the present study the researcher found that preschool children exhibited these varied kinds of prosocial behavior under different conditions. Not all children exhibited all behaviors, but all children exhibited more than one kind of prosocial behavior.

The researcher used Beaty's eight prosocial behaviors when first noting prosocial behavior. As the researcher observed prosocial behavior, she sorted it into sets of like data. It was soon apparent that there were more than eight kinds of prosocial behavior. Two weeks after beginning data collection, the researcher and two other educators wrote descriptors for each coding sheet. Each code was given a numerical label and all subsequent observations were coded with these numbers. The list of prosocial indicators was enlarged to include 32 descriptors. During and again at the conclusion of data collection, the three educators each took an identical set of the coding sheets and sorted them into the 32 types of prosocial behaviors. The three sets were then member-checked by all three educators. When all of the coding sheets were found to have been sorted the same way, the researcher considered the categories validated.

All interactions observed during the three targeted curricular contexts led to the 32 prosocial behaviors observed. The researcher worked with the preschool director when they sorted these 32 behaviors into seven broad categories. Once the 32 kinds of prosocial behavior were identified, the researcher took two complete sets of data (coding forms, Appendix A). One set of data was given to the preschool director and the researcher took the other set. The two faculty members sat at different tables and sorted the entire set of data into groups that seemed to "fit" together. After checking to be sure that both sets of data were sorted into the same sets (of which there were seven), the two women wrote one- or two-word descriptors which described the kinds of prosocial behavior in the sets and would serve as categories for further analysis. The seven broad categories were as follows:

1. Empathy. This category included when children showed concern for another person who was in distress or showed delight for another person who was happy. An example was when Albert came over to where Charlotte was sitting during outdoor play time. He asked Charlotte why she wasn't playing with the other children. She told him she didn't feel well so she was just "resting for a bit." Albert acted concerned about Charlotte and asked, "Is there anything I could do to make you feel better"?

2. Sharing. Behaviors classified as sharing included objects that were shared, personal belongings given to another person, turns taken with the toys provided by the preschool, a turn waited for politely, or when children did something for another person. An example of sharing occurred when Willie noticed that Scarlett didn't have any milk at snack time. The milk pitcher was empty, so Willie offered to "share my milk with you, Scarlett." Scarlett said she wanted some milk but that Willie "must want some, too." Willie then walked to the kitchen holding the empty milk pitcher. When he returned to the table with more milk, Scarlett smiled and said, "Thank you, Willie, honey." Sharing occurred more frequently at center/activity time and snack time than it did during outdoor play.

3. Helping. Helping behaviors occurred most frequently during snack time, followed by center/activity time, and least on the playground. This broad category included when a

child helped another with a task, helped a person in need, taught another person how to do something, gave aid unbeknownst to another person, explained an idea to another person, offered help or actually did something for another person. The researcher observed as Maureen noticed Chelsea was having trouble pouring ice water into her cup. "Here, Chelsea," said Maureen, "You hold the cup, and I'll pour the water for you." Chelsea held the cup steady while Maureen poured the water for her.

4. Communication. Prosocial communication occurred primarily during snack time and to a lesser extent during center/activity time with little communication during outdoor play. This category encompassed all aspects of communication--when a child made personal compliments or positive comments, asked to see something that belonged to another person, or engaged in positive nonverbal communication. An illustration of this was when Tommy told the group at the discovery center that he thought they would really love the pudding that he saw would be served for snack.

5. Proximity seeking. This category included when a child sought physical contact, sought proximity, invited another person to join, paired off as two friends, missed another person who was not present, asked others to join, or sought others to play with. An example which illustrated this was when Lane grabbed Ebony's hand while walking to the

snack table. Ebony had a huge smile on her face as she found two empty seats next to each other at the table. Lane and Ebony sat down next to each other. Lane turned to the rest of the children at the table and said, "Me and Ebony are going to Busch Gardens after we go to Disney World first."

6. Leadership. This category was narrowly defined as occurring when a child facilitated the group or facilitated play. An example of leadership was when the group of children on the playground were all lying on their backs looking at the clouds in the sky. Suddenly, Albert nudged the child next to him and said, "Let's play 'Duck, duck, goose.'" All six children jumped up as Albert said to Charlotte, "You be the "ducker" first. O.K., we're ready." Charlotte then walked slowly around the circle of children, patted them one at the time, and said,"Duck, duck, duck."

7. Other. This category was devised to include any behavior which did not fit neatly into any of the other six categories. This category included when a child requested help, responded to a request in a positive manner, self-corrected one's own behavior, or planned a prosocial activity. An example of this occurred when Charlotte and Albert were sitting together at the art table. Charlotte asked Albert to help her decide how dark the trunk of the tree she was painting should be. Albert smiled broadly and told her that he thought it should be painted darker.

To summarize, the researcher grouped the 32 behaviors into the following seven categories:

1. Empathy
    - shows concern for someone in distress
    - shows delight for someone experiencing pleasure
2. Sharing
    - shares something with another
    - gives something of his/her own to another
    - takes turns with toys or activities
    - waits for turn without a fuss
    - makes something for another
    - shows something to another
3. Helping
    - helps another do a task
    - helps another in need
    - gives aid unknown to another
    - offers help
    - does something for another
4. Communication
    - engages in social discourse
    - compliments others
    - makes positive comments
    - asks to see something of another's
    - engages in positive nonverbal communication
5. Proximity seeking
    - seeks physical contact
    - seeks proximity (marriage)
    - invites another to join
    - twosome (to be with a special friend)
    - asks to join others
    - seeks others to play with
6. Leadership
    - facilitates play
    - explains an idea to another
7. Other
    - teaches how to do
    - facilitates group
    - requests help
    - responds to request (in a positive manner)

Prosocial Behaviors in Three Curricular Contexts

The researcher observed a total of 726 prosocial behaviors during the 87 hours of observation--415 (57%) occurred in activity centers (35 minutes per day); 196 (26%) occurred at snack time (20 minutes per day); and 115 (15%) occurred during outdoor play time (15 minutes per day).

Table 1 reports the number of prosocial behaviors that were observed in each curricular context and the percentage by center for each category of prosocial behavior. In center/activity time approximately half of the children's prosocial behaviors were categorized as proximity seeking or helping. Children also shared 18% of the time. There were fewer observed instances of leadership, communication, or empathy. During snack time 36% of the observed prosocial behaviors were categorized as helping behaviors, 20% were sharing, and 18% were communication. There were fewer instances of proximity seeking and empathy. At outdoor play half of the prosocial behaviors were proximity seeking. The rest were fairly evenly divided among helping, sharing, and leadership, with only a few instances of communication and empathy. In summary, center/activity centers appeared to promote proportionally more proximity seeking and helping; snack appeared to promote more helping, sharing, and communication; while outdoor play was predominately proximity seeking.

Table 1

Frequency of Observed Prosocial Behaviors of 5-Year-Olds Related to Research Question 1 (Three Curricular Contexts) March 18, 1992, to June 29, 1992 (87 hours of observation)

	Center/ Activity 1:15-1:50		Snack Time 2:30-2:50		Outdoor Play 2:50-3:05		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Empathy	8	2	4	2	4	3	16	2
Sharing	75	18	40	20	15	13	130	18
Helping	103	24	70	36	18	15	191	26
Communication	34	8	35	18	5	4	74	10
Proximity Seeking	116	27	23	11	59	51	198	27
Leadership	53	12	20	10	11	9	84	11
Other	26	6	4	2	3	2	33	4
Total No. 726	415	100	196	99	115	100	726	100

However, because the children spent different amounts of time in each area, the data must also be interpreted by analyzing the number of behaviors that occurred proportional to the time children spent in each type of center (Table 2). By dividing the number of observations of each prosocial behavior in the center/activity time category (35 minutes per day) by 7, we obtain a weighted score by which we can compare the number of occurrences of prosocial behavior adjusted by time spent in each center) across centers. The number of prosocial behaviors at snack time (20 minutes per day) was

Table 2

Proportion of Prosocial Behaviors in Each Curricular Context, March 18, 1992, to June 29, 1992 (87 hours of observation)

	Center/ Activity			Snack Time			Outdoor Play			Overall		
	No.	Weight	%	No.	Weight	%	No.	Weight	%	No.	Weight	%
Empathy	8	1.14	33	4	1.00	29	4	1.33	38	16	3.47	100
Sharing	75	10.71	42	40	10.00	39	15	5.00	19	130	25.71	100
Helping	103	14.71	38	70	17.50	46	18	6.00	16	191	38.21	100
Communication	34	4.86	32	35	8.75	57	5	1.67	11	74	15.28	100
Proximity Seeking	116	16.57	39	23	5.75	14	59	19.67	47	198	41.99	100
Leadership	53	7.57	47	20	5.00	31	11	3.67	22	14	16.24	100
Other	26	3.71	61	4	1.00	19.5	3	1.00	19.5	33	5.14	100
Total	415	59.27	40	196	49.00	33	115	38.33	26	726	146.62	100

N = number of behaviors
Weight = center numbers divided by 7, snack numbers divided by 4, outdoor play numbers divided by 3.
% = percent of weighted occurrences in each curricular context compared to total weighted occurrences in all curricular contexts.

divided by 4, and the number of prosocial behaviors at outdoor play (15 minutes per day) was divided by 3. Then, to determine the percent of each category of social behavior occurring at each center, the weighted scores were converted into a percentage of the total for each behavior.

Overall, proportionate to the amount of time spent in each center, prosocial behaviors were observed in center/activity (59.27), snack (49.00), and outdoor play (38.33). The types of prosocial behavior differed by center.

The incidents of empathy were stable across the three curricular contexts and were primarily the actions of two 5-year-old children. These children, a boy and a girl, were advanced in their prosocial development. The boy was an only child, and the girl was the oldest of three children. It was the second year of preschool for both children. The researcher held informal conversations with the parents as the children were dropped off and picked up at the center. Both children's parents agreed that their children were usually prosocial in interactions with others. The researcher observed Albert's father as he quietly explained to Albert how he should act at the preschool family picnic. Albert was running toward the iced tea table. His father nodded to him and softly said, "Hey, buddy, you need to walk around people's blankets instead of across them, O.K.?" Albert looked down at the blanket and said, "Sure, Dad, I'll be more careful."

Sharing occurred twice as much during center/activity time and snack time as it did during outdoor play. Children often shared at the writing center and the art center. The nature of the writing and art center necessitated sharing materials among several children. These centers were usually operating at full capacity, so there were several other children with whom material could be shared.

During center/activity time, while at small group, the teacher who had prepared materials for the group modeled sharing materials, which led to the children imitating sharing behavior. In some instances, the teacher established the environment. "Let's see, we have six children, but I only made three sets of clowns. I wonder what we should do." The children suggested, "We could share," and "We could take turns."

Helping occurred almost three times as often during snack as it did on the playground and over two times as often at centers as on the playground. After inspecting the anecdotal records, it became apparent that several of the children also helped their parents and siblings at home. The parents described typical interactions that included helping behaviors their children demonstrated at home. "Ebony helps me with her baby brother every night as we get ready for our bedtime story. She gets the books and I get the baby. Then we read."

In conversations with Charlotte's mother, the researcher learned that, at home, Charlotte often tried to help the two younger children in her family. She helped with bath time, dinner, and bedtime routines. Her mother said she was invaluable, "a real mother's helper, and she's only 5 years old!"

Communication was much more frequent at snack time and over twice as frequent in centers as on the playground. The writing center that promoted communication in a written form was the center at which the most positive communication occurred. Verbal communication was a by-product since the children were at a center designed to promote written communication. The teachers modeled communication daily by writing notes to be placed in the children's mail boxes.

Outdoor play was most prevalent for proximity seeking among children during the 15-minute time period when weighted time is considered. In fact, it occurred three times as often during outdoor play as during snack time. Proximity seeking was also prevalent during center/ activity time. The children planned where to play according to who was at particular centers. Snack time was 20 minutes a day. There were fewer proximity-seeking behaviors, possibly because the children had assigned tables according to group. At the assigned tables, children sometimes saved seats for friends.

Like most of the other prosocial behavior indicators, leadership most often occurred during center/activity time.

It seems the established environment contributed to the leadership behaviors demonstrated by the 5-year-olds. Many of the center/activity areas did not always have a teacher in attendance. Because there were areas unattended by adults, the 5-year-olds had opportunities to provide leadership for the other children at those centers.

Many times the children imitated the leadership behaviors they had observed their teachers naturally exhibit. For example, the children seemed to be directing the other children in order to best benefit the rest of the group, such as when during snack time Charlotte said, "Scarlett, after you're done, please pass the chicken nuggets to Ebony; she hasn't been served yet."

Prosocial Behavior During Center/Activity Time

1.a. What kinds of prosocial behaviors do 5-year-olds exhibit during center/activity time? (See Tables 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 and Appendix E.)

The constructivist approach to socialization stresses the importance of the child's activities on the environment. This investigation found the environment was a crucial component of prosocial behavior. Different activity choices resulted in different kinds of prosocial behavior being observed. For example, in the art center a great deal of proximity seeking occurred, as children chose to sit next to and work with another child. The puzzle center had little sharing and no observed instances of helping. Different kinds of prosocial behavior can result from a child acting on his or her environment.

Vygotsky (1978) also emphasized the importance of children's activities, especially while interacting with others. While the children were involved in different activities they were also interacting with others both physically and through the use of language.

Table 3 shows the result of a t-test for significance. During center/activity time, proximity seeking was significant at the .05 level. During snack time, three kinds of prosocial behavior were significant at the .01 level: helping, communication, and proximity seeking. During outdoor play time four kinds of prosocial behavior were significant at the .01 level: sharing, helping, communication, and proximity seeking.

Table 4 summarizes data on frequency of prosocial behaviors for each of the centers open during center/ activity time. Of the 415 prosocial behaviors observed during center/ activity time, 116 (27%) were categorized as proximity seeking, 103 were helping (24%), 75 were sharing (18%), 53 were leadership (12%), 34 were communication (8%), 26 were "other" (6%), and 8 were empathy (1%).

The categories in Tables 4 and 5 emerged when the researcher consolidated the individual centers into groups with similar goals and objectives. The grouped centers had

Table 3

Results of T-Test for Significance. Proportion of Prosocial Behaviors in Each Curricular Context, March 18, 1992, to June 29, 1992 (87 hours of observation)

	Center/ Activity			Snack Time			Outdoor Play			Overall			Overall Mean
	No.	Weight	%	No.	Weight	%	No.	Weight	%	No.	Weight	%	
Empathy	8	1.14	33	4	1.00	29	4	1.33	38	16	3.47	100	1.16
Sharing	75	10.71	42	40	10.00	39	15	5.00**	19	130	25.71	100	8.57
Helping	103	14.71	38	70	17.50**	46	18	6.00**	16	191	38.21	100	12.74
Communication	34	4.86	32	35	8.75**	57	5	1.67**	11	74	15.28	100	5.09
Proximity Seeking	116	16.57*	39	23	5.75**	14	59	19.67**	47	198	41.99	100	14.00
Leadership	53	7.57	47	20	5.00	31	11	3.67	22	14	16.24	100	5.41
Other	26	3.71	61	4	1.00	19.5	3	1.00	19.5	33	5.14	100	1.71
Total	415	59.27**	40	196	49.00	33	115	38.33**	26	726	146.62	100	48.87

N = number of behaviors
Weight = center numbers divided by 7, snack numbers divided by 4, outdoor play numbers divided by 3.
% = percent of weighted occurrences in each curricular context compared to total weighted occurrences in all curricular contexts.

* = significant at .05 level.
** = significant at .01 level.

Table 4

Frequency of Observed Prosocial Behavior of 5-Year-Olds Arranged by Types of Centers Related to Question 1 (Center/Activity Areas), March 18, 1992, to June 29, 1992 (1:15-1:50 daily)

	Empathy		Sharing		Helping		Communication		Proximity Seeking		Leadership		Other		Total (by center/ activity)	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Construction	1	3	2	5	8	21	2	5	13	34	11	29	1	3	38	100
blocks	1	3	2	6	7	22	1	3	9	28	11	34	1	3	32	99
table toys	0	0	0	0	1	17	1	17	4	67	0	0	0	0	6	101
Pretend Play	1	3	1	3	10	30	0	0	14	42	6	18	1	3	33	99
housekeeping	1	3	1	3	10	34	0	0	10	34	6	21	1	3	29	98
grocery	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	100	0	0	0	0	4	100
puppets	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Individual	1	9	1	9	2	18	0	0	2	18	5	45	0	0	11	99
listening	0	0	0	0	2	67	0	0	1	33	0	0	0	0	3	100
computer	1	12	1	12	0	0	0	0	1	12	5	63	0	0	8	99
Process	0	0	5	17	4	13	7	23	9	30	3	10	2	6	30	99
reading	0	0	4	19	4	19	1	4	8	38	2	10	2	10	21	100
music	0	0	1	11	0	0	6	67	1	11	1	11	0	0	9	100
Creating	4	2	50	28	44	25	14	8	34	19	13	7	17	10	176	99
writing	2	2	24	27	19	21	9	10	21	23	7	8	8	9	90	100
art	1	2	18	28	18	28	4	6	10	16	4	6	9	14	64	100
woodworking	1	5	8	36	7	32	1	5	3	14	2	9	0	0	22	101

Table 4--continued.

	Empathy		Sharing		Helping		Communication		Proximity Seeking		Leadership		Other		Total (by center/ activity)	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Manipulatives	0	0	10	21	11	23	3	6	17	35	5	10	2	5	48	100
puzzles	0	0	4	57	0	0	1	14	1	14	0	0	1	14	7	99
discovery	0	0	3	14	6	29	1	5	7	83	3	14	1	5	21	100
water play	0	0	3	15	5	25	1	5	9	45	2	10	0	0	20	100
Other Small Group	1	1	6	8	24	30	8	10	27	34	10	13	3	4	79	100
Total No. 415 Group	8	1	75	18	103	25	34	8	116	28	53	13	26	6	415	99

Table 5

Results of T-Test Significance. Frequency of Observed Prosocial Behavior of 5-Year-Olds Arranged by Types of Centers Related to Question 1 (Center/Activity Areas), March 18, 1992, to June 29, 1992 (1:15-1:50 daily)

	Empathy	Sharing	Helping	Communication	Proximity Seeking	Leadership	Other	Overall Mean
Construction	1**	2**	8	2**	13**	11**	1**	5.43
blocks	1**	2	7	1	9**	11**	1**	4.57
table toys	0**	0	1	1	4**	0	0	.86
Pretend Play	1**	1**	10**	0	14**	6	1**	4.71
housekeeping	1**	1**	10**	0	10**	6	1**	4.14
grocery	0	0	0	0	4**	0	0	.57
puppets	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Individual	1	1	2	0	2	5**	0	1.57
listening	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	.43
computer	1	1	0	0	1	5**	0	1.14
Process	0	5	4	7	9**	3	2	4.29
reading	0	4	4	1	8**	2	2	3.00
music	0	1	0	6**	1	1	-	1.29
Creating	4**	50**	44**	14**	34**	13**	17**	25.14
writing	2**	24**	19**	9	21**	7**	8**	12.86
art	1**	18**	18**	4**	10	4**	9	9.14
woodworking	1	8**	7**	1	3	2	0	3.14

Table 5--continued.

	Empathy	Sharing	Helping	Communication	Proximity Seeking	Leadership	Other	Overall Mean
Manipulatives	0	10**	11**	3**	17**	5	2**	6.86
puzzles	0	4**	0	1	1	0	1	1.00
discovery	0	3	6**	1	7**	3	1	3.00
water play	0	3	5	1	9**	2	0	2.86
Other Small Group	1**	6**	24**	8	27**	10	3**	11.29
Total No. 415	8**	75**	103**	34**	116**	53**	26**	59.29

* = significant at .05 level.
** = significant at .01 level.

similar kinds of prosocial behavior observed. After the individual center/activity areas data were analyzed individually, the researcher arranged the 15 centers into 6 general types of centers: construction, pretend play, individual activity, process, creating things, and manipulatives. The small group center did not fit any of the categories so the researcher will discuss it last. Table 5 gives the results of a t-test for significance which was applied to each of the 6 general center types and the 16 center/activities. The centers that were significant at the .01 level are marked. The centers will now be discussed by type.

Construction	blocks table toys
Pretend Play	housekeeping grocery puppets
Individual Activity	listening center computer
Process	reading corner music
Creating Things	writing art woodworking
Manipulatives	puzzles discovery water table

Prosocial Behaviors in Each Center/Activity Area

This section presents the data by categories of centers. A summary of each kind of prosocial behavior will follow.

Construction Centers

The construction centers of blocks and table toys were conducive to proximity seeking and leadership with some helping and sharing.

Block center. The purpose of the block center was to provide opportunities for motor development and planning. The children had access to more blocks than could be used. This center allowed children to practice design building. Block building encouraged learning about shapes, weights and balances, height and depth, smoothness, roughness, and volume. The children learned to solve problems and make decisions as well as create patterns while building. The teacher's main role in this area was to supervise the construction activity and insure that the area was properly rearranged at the end of center/activity time.

The block center usually attracted boys who were 4 and 5 years old. While the table toys appealed to children of different ages and sexes, girls were rarely observed at the block center. The boys at the center seemed to be "team players" who were of the same approximate maturity level. The researcher observed the children helping another child do a task (5 times), such as stacking blocks or building a structure. The children rarely shared at this center (2 observations), probably because there were several hundred blocks and the center was limited to six children at a time. Abundance of materials would also explain why the children never waited for turns without a fuss. There were enough blocks and enough room for all of the children to be able to play at the same time. The children did not make something for someone else in the block center, possibly because of the temporary nature of block building. The children helped others do a task 7 times but not others in need, probably because the children at the block center were not really in need. It was surprising to this researcher that the children did not teach others how to do something at the block center.

Table toys center. The table toys center was a collection of manipulatives and materials such as legos, duplos, etc. Things could be put together and taken apart. Children compared objects and sorted them into groups. Children used and described items in many creative ways as they counted and compared numbers and amounts of toys. Children who just wanted to play with legos could, while other children who wanted to weigh and measure toys could do so at the same time, standing next to each other. In this way, children did not feel "less able" than more mature peers since they were all playing at the same center with the same basic materials. The teacher's role was to set out certain table toys and circulate around the general vicinity of the tables. The teacher made suggestions about how to use the toys and asked the children about what they were doing.

This center primarily attracted boys and girls who were interested in playing with objects at a table with their friends. With whom they played seemed more important than the objects with which they played. On several occasions, the researcher removed particularly popular play items and the same children still frequented the center, pausing just long enough to choose something new to play with. This convinced the researcher that the children went to this center primarily to be with friends (4 times), away from the direct supervision of teachers, since there was no teacher specifically assigned to this center. The only prosocial communication observed was an incident in which a positive comment was made: "Boy, that is a neat house! Did you build that yourself?" The children were never observed sharing, probably because there were so many manipulatives available to the children. There were between 30 and 40 different table toys available at all times. Children demonstrated very little helping behavior at table toys, just one time. Most of the manipulates were developmentally appropriate for children aged 2 and older. The children really did not need help in order to use the materials satisfactorily.

Pretend Play Centers

The pretend play centers included housekeeping, the grocery store, and puppets. The researcher noted proximity seeking and helping often (14 and 10 times, respectively), possibly because children can imitate the many forms of prosocial behavior they have observed as they play with friends. Pretend play is a time when delayed imitation often occurs. A child might recreate a prosocial behavior observed at a previous time, either at home or at school. The pretend centers seemed to be a good place for children to practice newly acquired social skills.

Housekeeping. The purpose of the housekeeping center was to give children the opportunity to express themselves with costumes, props, and a replica of kitchen/living room. Children were able to explore the roles of mothers, fathers, and children. The children could understand what it felt like to play at being someone else and pantomimed actions such as cooking and vacuuming. This center helped children learn to use their imaginations and increased the child's ability to communicate with others about personally meaningful experiences. Children were given the chance to express their emotions through role play. It was the responsibility of the teacher to facilitate whatever play was in progress. The teacher may have asked for a snack, made suggestions regarding appropriate responses, or kept the interaction running smoothly. The teacher often initiated themes that allowed all of the children present an opportunity to interact.

The housekeeping center was often filled with the younger boys and girls and the older girls. The boys were attracted to the dress-up clothes, and the girls seemed interested in the dolls, cooking, and party clothes. In the housekeeping center, children helped others do a task 7 times. Usually one child helped another child at clean-up time. In general, the teachers encouraged children to help clean whatever center they were at when the bell rang, whether or not they had contributed to the mess. The researcher observed proximity-seeking behavior in the housekeeping center 10 times. Because this center was one in which children recreated experiences from their own family life, it seemed appropriate that the children expressed feelings of affection for each other. The children facilitated the play of others 6 times while interacting at housekeeping. Play seemed more enjoyable when two or more children played together. The children informally assigned roles: "You be the baby, and I'll be the mommy." The group was also facilitated: "If you don't want to be the baby, it's o.k. I'll be the baby."

The children did not show concern for others in distress while at the housekeeping center. After examining the low overall incidence of this form of prosocial behavior, the researcher decided that children rarely experienced distress in this particular preschool, so the children did not have much opportunity to help other children who were experiencing distress.

The children did not share as much as the researcher had expected. Only one incidence occurred during observation of the housekeeping center. This center was large, and an abundance of toys was available. A total of six children were allowed in the center where 11 different baby dolls were available. Over 2 dozen separate "dress up" outfits hung in the armoire. With two cribs, three rocking chairs, and two high-chairs, the children always had access to play things.

No incidents of prosocial communication were observed at the housekeeping center. This lack seemed puzzling to the researcher at first. After considerable thought about the kinds of conversation and communication that generally occurred in this center, the researcher decided the difference was in the type of communication that occurred. While in the housekeeping center, all participants took on a role that fit with the rest of the members. Conversation occurred within the context of the play in progress. It would have been difficult for a child to step out of his or her role as daddy or mommy to communicate on a "real" level, such as child making positive comments. While the children were acting in their prescribed role, they were authentic, almost never breaking character.

Grocery store. The grocery store was originally designed as an extension of the housekeeping center. The children went grocery shopping, manipulated grocery lists, food products, and money. This center allowed more children to interact between the grocery and housekeeping centers. Children physically manipulated money and food containers, as they matched coupons to various food products. The teacher's role at this center was to float between housekeeping and the grocery store. At times, children needed to be encouraged to "run to the store for some eggs." The teacher usually reminded the storekeeper to keep the shelves tidy.

The children who were usually attracted to the grocery store were the more mature 5-year-olds. These children understood how to use money, a cash register, coupons, and checks. It was a 5-year-old's idea to use black paper for "a scanner, you know, like at Publix." The grocery store had little observed prosocial activity. The researcher observed both proximity-seeking behavior twice and twosomes twice at this center. The researcher believes the reason she observed little prosocial behavior was that the center was too small for more than two children to play together. The children generally shopped alone, filling a grocery basket or cart. The researcher rarely observed children being the grocer or the cashier, so there was little reason for interacting with another person, unless there was a fellow shopper.

Puppet center. The puppet center was equipped so that children could watch puppet shows performed by other children. The preschool director felt the children needed avenues of self-expression. Children were able to imitate and describe sounds from their environment as they used their imaginations. The children also learned to cooperate with each other as appreciative members of the audience. The teacher's role in this center was to be sure no more than three children were behind the stage at a given time and actually be the audience if no one else was watching. The teacher also invited other children to watch the performance with her.

This center was popular with the older children who liked to pretend to be large animals. It seemed that the children who frequented this center also talked about cartoon characters such as Ninja Turtles, Batman, and Spiderman. The researcher observed no incidents of prosocial behavior at the puppet center. Most of the interactions occurred as the children stood behind the wooden puppet stage and used the puppets in an aggressive manner. This behavior, observed in the same children who were extremely prosocial and gentle in other areas of the classroom, was genuinely puzzling to the researcher. The reason for the total absence of prosocial behavior in this center was never adequately resolved.

Individual Activity Centers

The individual activity centers included the listening center and the computer. Overall there was much less prosocial behavior at individual activity centers than at other centers, and when there was, leadership behaviors were most likely to occur. Usually, one child already knew how to use the materials, such as the computer. If another child happened to be watching, the child using the materials often directed the child in ways to participate. Including individual type centers and teaching a few children how to use the centers appropriately should facilitate leadership behaviors.

Listening center. The listening center consisted of a book and a prerecorded cassette tape. This activity built a child's self-confidence towards being able to read. The child also learned to listen for a bell that rang when it was time to turn the page. Children learned to enjoy books and being read to. The child later recalled what was seen and heard. This center tended to lengthen children's attention spans. Children who already had favorite books were able to select those favorite books for listening. Children who understood the basic concepts of print were able to "read along" as they listened to the story. The teacher usually selected a book and put the corresponding tape into the cassette player, having made sure it had been rewound. The teacher often sat at the table with a headset so that the process of reading along with a tape was modeled. In this way, the child saw the adult reading and enjoying stories.

The children who usually chose the listening center were children who were read to at home and enjoyed being read to. One of the parents mentioned that her daughter, Tara, liked the listening center so much that she was going to buy her one "just like the one she uses at school." Tara told her mother, "Then, my baby brother can read books with me, just like we do at preschool." The listening center was located between the reading corner and the writing center. There was space for six children at a table with individual copies of a book being listened to through headphones.

Like most of the other centers, the researcher observed no empathetic interactions at the listening center. The children did not share at this center, either. This is probably due to each child having his or her own copy of the book and a headset. The children did help others twice (turn pages or adjust the volume on the headset). The researcher did not observe communicating with each other in a prosocial manner while at the listening center. This was probably due to the children being intent on hearing the story and following along in the book. Very little proximity-seeking behavior occurred at the listening center (1 occurrence). The researcher believed that because the listening center was an individual type center, the children were independent with very little interaction between participants.

Computer center. This center met the needs of the more intellectually advanced children who were already reading, writing, and doing simple mathematical operations. The computer provided reinforcement of specific skills, such as letter recognition, simple addition, and fine motor development. The teacher inserted the appropriate disk and made sure the computer was operating. If a child had difficulty remembering which button to push, the teacher provided verbal prompts.

The children who usually chose the computer center were the older, more mature children who had attended the preschool for at least 2 years and felt they were "too big" to play at the other centers. The researcher observed relatively few prosocial interactions at the computer center (6 total). The computer had one adult-sized chair. In order for prosocial behavior to flourish, the children could sit together and alternate using the keyboard and thinking of the answer. Leadership qualities were observed (5 times) usually with one child deciding it would be best to take turns with the equipment so each child present could participate. This center was set up so the older children could be challenged, but the teachers never actively promoted using the computer center.

Process Centers

The process centers included the reading corner and the music center. Proximity seeking was likely to occur in these centers (8 times at reading, once at music), as children joined their friends at either the reading area or the music center. Communication also occurred at these two centers (reading once, music 4 times). These centers need to be large enough that a group of children can participate while still allowing an atmosphere that allows, even encourages, communication. These two centers seemed to always have room for one more child. In both centers, while walking past, children noticed how much fun the participants were having and many times joined in.

Reading center. The purpose of the reading center was for children to learn to enjoy reading and books. The children began to tell stories from the pictures in books. Adults and older children modeled the process of reading. This center was appropriate for children who had never been read to as well as children who were fluent readers. A wide variety of reading materials was available so that children of all levels were able to find interesting books. The role of the teacher was to facilitate the children's apparent interest. Sometimes the teacher read books to one or more children. On occasion, a child read to the teacher. When appropriate, the teacher recommended specific books to children or helped them find books written by their favorite authors.

Younger children who enjoyed being read to and older children who liked to read and manipulate books were often observed in this center. It was generally the less physically active children who were sitting with books for long periods of time. The reading corner in this center did not seem typical of other reading centers with which the researcher was familiar. The preschool had an acknowledged whole language slant. This center was often crowded and rarely quiet. Children usually looked at books in pairs, often with both persons reading aloud. The children shared the books and took turns as they waited for a particularly popular book (Chicka, Chicka, Boom, Boom).

The children also helped others do a task 4 times. For example, children helped others return to the shelf the books that had been read. One child showed another child the holes where the caterpillar had eaten through food (The Very Hungry Caterpillar). The center incorporated predictable books and manipulative-type books in order for the children to feel confident as they helped others "read" the books provided in the reading center. The children chose to read aloud any books that the teacher had read repeatedly so that the children knew the plot and general story line. When the teacher selected six to eight books a week and read them aloud several times, the children chose those books when they visited the reading center.

No compliments were heard in the reading corner. The researcher believed it was because this center tended to create the atmosphere of stories read at home. It is doubtful that children complimented their parents after they read a story to them.

Music center. The preschool director designed the music center so that children learned to use their bodies effectively. Fun and relaxation were found in bodily movement to music. Experience using large muscles was also provided. Children were able to learn the changing limitations of their bodies as they experienced the joy of achieving a skill. The teacher's role was that of a facilitator, demonstrator, and encourager. The teacher selected the musical activities and then directed the children in how to participate in the activity.

After observing the children in the music center, the researcher determined that the children who frequented this center tended to be active and not particularly inhibited. No shyness or reluctance to participate was observed. The music center, like the majority of centers, had no observed incidents of empathy. The researcher observed only one instance of sharing at the music center, but very few things were available for sharing. In this center the adult used the cassette player or the VCR to provide musical experiences for the children in the group. Manipulatives were rarely used, so it was understandable that little sharing transpired.

No incidents of helping behaviors occurred at the music center. The researcher attributed this to the developmentally appropriateness of the musical activities provided for the children. All of the children were able to participate in all of the music activities, unaided by others. Providing more difficult experiences could offer children the opportunity help another, show someone how, and explain how to do something for another person. Children did compliment each other at the music center (6 times). Often, compliments were made to another child, "You sure do walk like an elephant good." Proximity seeking at the music center was rarely observed, only once, possibly because the children were completely absorbed in what they were doing. Trying to hop like a bunny leaves little time to be looking for someone.

Creating Centers

Prosocial behavior can be promoted by including centers that culminate in a product made by the children. The interaction between the children and the materials promotes prosocial behavior. The conversation that occurs between the children in the group is often prosocial in nature as the children question and compliment each other's work. The creating centers in this preschool included writing, art, and woodworking.

Writing center. The purpose of the writing center was primarily to allow children to express themselves. The children were primarily concerned with the process more than the finished product. The children derived emotional satisfaction from being able to express themselves. The children also made choices and decisions with regard to materials used in their writing. The writing center served as a bridge for children's beginning written communication. Children who were not yet writing or even drawing simply folded paper in envelopes to put in someone's mailbox. Children who were already writing were able to create meaningful pieces of written dialog. The role of the teacher was to facilitate the children's writing. Materials were replenished as needed. The teacher modeled the process of writing at the table. The teacher helped with lettering, folded envelopes, and found the right mailboxes to put the letters into.

This center primarily attracted children who wanted either to write a letter or make a picture for someone else. The younger children who were not yet writing still wanted their papers put in an envelope so they could "give someone a letter." The writing center was an abundant source of prosocial activity (90 observations in all). Children usually used this center as an opportunity to make something for another person (14 times). The children also sought proximity with their friends at this time (21 times). Children helped others with a task (folding letters to fit in an envelope, licking envelopes, spelling names, and addressing envelopes) 8 times. Positive comments were heard 9 times at this center as children discussed the various works in progress. Children did not show delight for someone experiencing pleasure. This may be because the children were intent on completing their task and did not stop to watch the other children. When the bell rang to signal it was time to clean up all the centers, the children at the writing center were often visibly upset, afraid there would not be enough time to complete their project in order to take it home that day.

Children were not observed waiting for a turn without a fuss, probably because there were so many materials available for writing. There were enough markers, colored pencils, paper, stencils, and templates that all of the participants could be working at the same time.

Children did not give aid unknown to another at the writing center, possibly because the children were all seated at a table together. It would be difficult to help someone without attracting the attention of at least one person at the table because the children were seated so close together. Nor did children offer help to each other at the writing table. Most of the children at the writing center were so busy writing letters that they did not really attend to what the other children were doing. The children did not ask others to join the group, possibly because of the nature of the center. The children saw what they were doing as "real work" and did not behave in a frivolous or playful manner. Children basically went to the writing center when they wanted to work, not when they wanted to socialize with their friends. Such a serious attitude may have contributed to the children not facilitating actual play behavior at this center. The researcher believed children did not request help from others because, generally speaking, it was the children who were able to write that frequented the writing center. Most of these children believed they could write, whether they could or not. Children who were not interested in writing did not usually choose to go to the writing center.

Art center. The purpose of the art center was to provide for increased language ability by talking about the art project. The children learned to make choices and decisions. The children learned how to use their imaginations to make the kinds of creations they had in mind. Imagination was involved as children transferred their ideas to paper. Children used small muscle coordination to handle paint brushes. The art center served to help children get emotional satisfaction from being able to express themselves. Regardless of the artistic ability of the child, he or she is able to participate fully as appropriate to the child's development. The role of the teacher in the art center was to actively keep the center running smoothly. This included replenishing supplies, reminding children of the center procedures, and writing the children's names on the art work if they were not able to do it themselves.

All types of children were found to frequent the art center--older, younger, introverted, extroverted, active, and inactive--probably because all of the children were able to be successful at this center. At the art center, children showed concern for someone in distress on one occasion, such as when a child spilled washable paint on a pair of pants: "It's O.K.; it all comes out in the wash." Children shared materials with each other 7 times, even when there were enough for each child to have his or her own supplies. The children also helped each other with tasks 8 times. Since teachers encouraged process art (finger painting, easel painting, etc.), the children already knew how to manipulate the materials. When teachers provided a novel experience (the first time the children "fingerpainted" with shaving cream), less prosocial behavior occurred. Children became more familiarized with the new procedure, and more prosocial behavior emerged as the children helped others who were unfamiliar with the new procedure.

The children took turns with each other at the easels 5 times, probably because of the policy of putting one paint color and one brush at each easel. In order to use more than one color of paint, it would be necessary to share colors with the person at the next easel.

Children also gave things to each other at the art center 4 times. Children created something at the art center and then gave it to someone else, usually another child. Children facilitated group play 4 times as they tried to help the entire group function smoothly. Twice, children reminded other children of the rules and ensured that the rules were followed, such as when Kassi said, "Hold your hands together when you have paint on them. I left the water running so you wouldn't get the handles painted on. Now Amber can have your smock so she can paint."

It surprised the researcher that the children did not compliment each other's drawings. When the teachers participated and made string paintings along with the children, it was impossible to tell who did each picture. Since none of the paintings could be singled out as "better," the researcher concluded that with process art the children just do it, without regard as to which final product is better or even prettier. The paintings were not copied from a model, so they were all different, but they all appeared equally well done.

The children at the art center did not invite others to join them or seek others with whom to play, which may be attributed to the overall popularity of the art center. There were rarely empty chairs. Usually, the art center was filled to capacity within the first 5 minutes of center/ activity time. Occasionally, children who wanted to participate would mill about the center as they waited for an opening.

The children did not facilitate play at the art center, but since it was a "process" center, the children were really there to experience materials and create something. The children were so involved in what they were creating that they rarely had time to "play" in ways that might have been more appropriate at another center, such as housekeeping or blocks. The children did not do things for each other because all of the children were able to participate fully in all of the art experiences. The art center was always process rather than product oriented.

Woodworking center. The woodworking center was designed to give children an opportunity to create something permanent that could be taken home. The director of the preschool felt it was important that children use real pieces of wood and real tools in their work. This center allowed children the opportunity to use fine motor skills as well as eye-hand coordination. This center always had a teacher in attendance. The teacher made sure each child wore goggles before using a hammer. Strict safety rules were enforced by the teacher because of the nails and hammers used.

This center was usually frequented by the same group of "regulars," mostly 4- and 5-year-old boys and girls. Incidences of children helping others in need occurred 4 times at the woodworking center. Most of the time children helped each other hold pieces of wood or hammer pieces of wood together. The children also made something for others 5 times. The researcher attributes this to the nature of the center and children's prior experiences with woodworking at home. It seemed natural to "help" while something was being built. The children likely observed this in their own family. Also, usually when someone at home built or made something for a child, it was a "gift" given to them by an adult. In this way, it was possible that children had internalized the idea of making things that were gifts for someone else.

The children also shared with each other twice and helped others do a task twice. The researcher observed one child as he explained an idea to another while they discussed plans for building but did not observe children as they took turns or waited for a turn because the center accommodated four children, and there were tools and space for four children.

There were no observed instances of teaching a child how to do something in the woodworking center, probably due to the fact that the children simply nailed pieces of wood together at this center. Occasionally, children nailed milk jug tops onto the wood. It seemed the children knew what to do at this center. The procedure was the same every day, although those for whom the gifts were created varied. The older children tended to frequent this center, so it was possible that the younger children who needed instruction rarely went to this center. Children, wearing safety goggles and working silently, were intent on their creations.

Children did not offer help to their fellow carpenters. Very little communication occurred, only 1 instance, probably due to the intentness with which the children worked. As one child said, "You can't talk and hammer at the same time. Somebody might get hurt."

Since only four children were at this center at a particular time, children did not ask others to join or seek others to play with. Woodworking seemed to be the most serious of the centers. Children had specific plans when they worked and were rarely distracted by anyone or anything. The researcher believed the woodworking center was valuable for all preschool children and should be available for use whenever it can be properly supervised. This center allowed the children to create "gifts" for others. Some of the gifts were put in children's mailboxes; some were given to teachers; and many were taken home to give to family members. The parents reported that the "gifts" brought home encouraged prosocial interactions at home. One parent said that her daughter brought home a gift she had made for her father every day. It became an evening ritual the two enjoyed.

Manipulative Centers

The manipulative centers included puzzles, discovery, and the water table. Proximity-seeking behavior was usually exhibited at these centers (17 times) as well as helping (11 times), and sharing (10 times). Having appropriate, interesting, and inviting manipulatives in a place where children can see them is important. Changing the items available seemed to add interest for the children. The location of these centers is also important. Too much teacher intervention seemed to detract from the children's interest. Centers that are not usually full of children (such as puzzles) have a diminished appeal to children. It is important for the teachers to "sell" the children on particular centers, that is, promote the centers during group time, and the children will be more likely to visit those centers.

Puzzle center. The puzzle center allowed children the opportunity to work alone or with other children. The children derived satisfaction in completing a puzzle which may have enhanced their self-confidence. Working with puzzles promoted improved eye-hand coordination as pieces were put together and taken apart. This center allowed for some "down" time, where children quietly relaxed while still involved in a project. The teacher's role was to equip the center with puzzles that related to the general theme or time of year. There was usually a teacher in the general area but not specifically in the puzzle center.

This center seemed to attract restless children who looked for a place to unwind and more mature children who really wanted to put certain puzzles together. One teacher suggested that the children at this center might either have puzzles of their own at home or may have parents who put puzzles together as a hobby. The puzzle center had 7 instances of observed prosocial behavior. The puzzle center consisted of low shelves holding approximately a dozen puzzles. The children manipulated the puzzle pieces on a long low table designed for this particular center. Usually, there was only one child at the center at a time although there was room for five children. It was difficult to be prosocial with just one person at a center.

The children did not make things or give things to others at the puzzle center, but this was not a "creating-type" center. The children also did not show things to one another, which was rather surprising to the researcher. It is understandable that physical contact and proximity seeking were not observed behaviors at this center since it would take at least two people to have this type of interaction. The researcher did not observe invitations to join, missing someone, asking others to join, or seeking others to play with, possibly because children went to the puzzle center to be alone and enjoy some quiet time. There really was not a quiet center in the preschool. The reading corner, traditionally a quiet area, was one of the most popular areas, and the children usually read books aloud to each other. The researcher also believed group facilitation, which was not observed, would occur more frequently if there was actually a group of children at the puzzle center.

Discovery center. The purpose of the discovery center was to provide appropriate experiences with science-type activities. The children compared and sorted objects into groups, used and described things in different way, recognized and created patterns and compared numbers and amounts. Different scientific-type materials were also available, such as magnifying glasses, color prisms, an incubator, etc. Some children saw the discovery center as a convenient place to "stop off" between centers. Other older children were actually interested in the various scientific experiences the teachers had planned. The teacher's role was to set up and direct the investigation planned for the day. The teacher first showed the children the day's activity, such as an ant farm. After the apparatus was explained, the children explored all aspects of the ant farm. The teacher asked and answered questions about the topic under study.

This center was usually attractive to all but the most timid children. If during group time the teacher promoted what would be happening at the discovery center, children lined up to have a turn. If nothing very interesting had been planned, it was sometimes more difficult to get children to stay at the center. Teachers who were excited about what they were doing usually had more children at the center.

At the discovery center, children often exhibited proximity-seeking behavior (7 times) and group-facilitating behavior (3 times). Since this was an open-ended center, children dropped in and left at will. Children often stopped by and joined a friend who was at the center. Children helped others do a task 3 times and showed another child how to manipulate the equipment. The researcher also observed children as they explained ideas to others 3 times, understandably so, since much of science seeks to explain ideas and solve problems.

Children gave things to each other in the discovery center twice, as they stopped by the center momentarily on their way to another center and gave gifts to friends as they left to go somewhere else. Children did not compliment others, probably because the children at the discovery center did not usually create things that could be commented on and complimented. The children usually just observed what was going on. The difficulty of the task may have limited the opportunity for the child to interact with others.

In the discovery area, children did not appear to miss friends, ask others to join, or seek others to play with, most likely due to the nature of the discovery center. The discovery area was not a center where play was extended to include several children. Usually the children were fairly independent, manipulating the equipment alone. Once the children had used the equipment to personal satisfaction, the children left the discovery center to go play elsewhere.

Water table. The water table was designed to give children the opportunity to do center-type activities outdoors. While using the water table, children were able to relax and center their attention on the task at hand. The children had the opportunity to learn about size and measurement through their experiences with measuring spoons, cups, and different-sized containers, as well as which kinds of things floated in water.

The water table played an important function in the children's social development. The children had an opportunity to play alone and did not have to compete with other children as with some other activities. This was especially important for children who had trouble getting along with others.

The teacher set the water table outside and filled it with water. The manipulatives were put in a basket and taken outside. Since the children were outside, the teacher stayed with the center. The teacher often initiated conversations with the children at the center.

The children who frequented the water table usually arrived in pairs. The children seemed to have talked about what they wanted to do and together decided to go to the water table. These children quietly conversed with each other and the teacher, usually in an obviously relaxed manner.

The water table was a popular center. With room for a total of four children, this center reached capacity within the first 5 minutes of center/activity time. The water table was usually outside since the spring weather was warm and breezy.

The children were observed as they shared the manipulatives provided once. Each child wore a smock and then used whatever was selected from the choices offered (funnels, measuring cup, an egg beater, pitchers, a turkey baster, sponges, etc.). The children were not able to make something for another person, but they could take turns with the manipulatives which was observed once.

There were few examples of communication (one compliment) at the water table. The researcher attributed this to the nature of the water play center. The children usually were involved with the water while at the same time carrying on conversations with the other boys and girls standing at the water table. The children talked about friends, family, and what was going on at the preschool. Conversation was easy and reciprocal.

Proximity seeking was often observed at the water table (9 times). The children talked about marrying another child at the center 4 times. The researcher believed the reason children did not typically ask others to join them or seek others to play with was due to the limited space (four children) at this center.

Small Group

"Small group" was analyzed separately since it did not fit in any of the six general center types.

During small group, the teacher worked at a table with five or six children on a specific skill. Often language or math skills were reviewed in this group. For example, the teacher had prepared a set of five different-sized clowns.

In this activity the children arranged the clowns in order according to size.

The researcher observed the children 24 times at this center as they helped another child do a task. The teachers allowed and even encouraged the children to help each other. This interaction seemed to have shades of cooperative learning embedded within it. Children who were allowed to work together did so in a positive manner. ("Can Laura and I do our puzzle together? Thank you. Here, Laura, this is where it goes."

The children sought proximity of others 27 times. This was because after the teacher concluded the small group interaction, the children were free to leave and go to another center of their choosing. Many times the children discussed possible centers to visit with whomever was seated close by. Children negotiated choices, intent on being with their friend ("We can go to the computer now if we go to housekeeping next. Is that all right with you? O.K. Let's go!").

Leadership was observed 10 times as children facilitated their group. Children distributed needed materials, found additional chairs for group members, and did whatever seemed necessary for the good of the group.

The researcher never observed the children seeking others to play with at small group. The teacher had the same group of children working together every day. The researcher did not observe the children planning a prosocial activity during small group time. This was because the activity was planned by the teacher who explained to the children what they should be doing. This was the most structured experience the preschool children participated in. The children at small group were not free to plan independent activities which might have been prosocial in nature because they were only at the group long enough to use the materials the teacher provided.

During center/activity time, the children were in proximity of each other, helped each other, shared with each other, assumed positions of leadership, and communicated in a prosocial manner with each other.

Categories of Prosocial Behavior Within Center/Activity Areas

Proximity Seeking

The researcher found evidence of 116 proximity-seeking behaviors in several different ways during center/activity time. On 22 occasions, children sought to go to centers with friends.

Hattie said, "I want to go wherever Lane goes."

At the writing center, children walked over to the table together and sat down next to each other. Children smiled at the person with whom they had arrived. If one child finished a project and appeared to be ready to leave, the other child asked him/her to stay until he or she too had finished.

> Lily and Laura were sitting together at the writing center. Lily turned to Miss Turner and said, "Teacher, Laura is my sweetie-heart." When Laura got up to leave, Lily said, "Don't go! I want you to stay right here with me until I'm all done." Laura stayed with Lily until Lily had finished her letter writing.

The children discussed marriage by either asking another child to marry them or telling the group whom they planned to marry. The researcher observed the children on 20 occasions as they invited another child who walked by to join the group.

> Hattie was seated at the writing table, busily working on a letter for her younger sister, Hazel. When Hattie noticed Albert and Charlotte walking past the writing center, she asked the two children, "Come to writing, please. We can work together."
>
> The two children looked at each other and smiled, saying, "O.K."

Helping Others

The researcher observed youngsters 103 times as they helped another person during activity time. Noted actions were helping another child find his/her name tag, helping a child locate needed materials, carrying something for another person, finding a chair so a child could join the group, helping to wipe up a spill, helping a child spell someone's name correctly, sharing supplies with another person, and helping to clean up a particular center. The researcher observed on 11 occasions that when a child was unsure of the procedure for working at the center, he or she consulted another child who explained the directions.

> Albert walked up to the wood working center. All of the other children were busy hammering nails into blocks of wood. Albert looked at Lane and said, "Can I come to work shop, too? What should I do? Should I get a clip?" Lane stopped working to show Albert what to do.

When a child was unable to reach the needed building tools or supplies, another child stopped the work in progress to help. Children explained what they were building, how it could be used, and for whom it was intended. The researcher observed on 26 different occasions that children stopped working on their own projects long enough to do something for another child who was at the same center and needed assistance.

> When Maureen spilled the magic markers at the writing table, Laura jumped up and immediately started picking up the markers.

Sharing

The researcher observed children 75 times as they shared with others during center/activity time. Given free access to materials, supplies, toys, games and space, at no time did the researcher observe children trying to selfishly keep from sharing with another person. For example, in both the art and writing centers, children shared the markers and other writing materials. On the day of the slumber party, several children shared their sleeping bags while the teacher read bedtime stories. At the sand table, children shared a set of measuring cups and common kitchen utensils.

The researcher found that during center/activity time children were usually involved creating something. Particularly popular centers included wood working, art, and writing. The researcher observed on 14 occasions that 5-year-olds seemed sincere in their desire to make something for another person and then give that gift to the intended person.

> Charlotte spent time at the writing table making a card for Nicole. When asked why she was making the card she said, "I went to Nicole's birthday party this morning and I wanted to make her a present."

At wood working, everything the children constructed was a gift intended for a specific person. At this center the workbench was often taken outside on sunny days. Although a teacher was always close by, the children engaged each other in prosocial conversations 34 times.

> On one occasion, there were five children of various ages at the bench and there were only three hammers. One of the older children said, "We can take turns."

The writing center lent itself best to the making and giving of "gifts." Children wrote letters to each other, discussed the letters they were making for family members, told each other that they were making something for them, made birthday cards for children on their birthday, made letters for small groups of children, told adults whom the letter was being written for, and wrote elaborate letters for another child at the writing center.

> Charlotte and Hattie went to the writing center together and got out the materials they would be using. Hattie made an elaborate letter for Albert. When Albert got up to leave, Hattie asked him, "Please stay here until I finish." Albert stayed with Hattie until she finished the hand-addressed envelope as well.

The researcher observed on 14 occasions children making and giving gifts in the writing center. Other times, a child asked another child to stay at that center until the letter was finished, occasionally handed a just-finished letter to a child who happened to walk by, wrote a letter to the teacher, or wrote a letter to another child who was absent that day.

Children shared materials and passed freely as they needed.

> "This marker smells good," said Hattie to Violet. "Do you want to use it when you do your hearts? It smells like cherry."
>
> Violet took the marker, saying, "Umm, I like this one."
>
> On another occasion, Fabian borrowed a crayon from Toccara. "I'll give it back to you as soon as I do this one little thing," he told her.

When equipment was limited, the children decided to "share, so everybody gets a turn." The children helped one another as they worked at the art center on 12 occasions.

> Charlotte dropped the whole container of markers as she was trying to decide which colors she needed. "I can pick them up for you," said Luke as he saw her expression of surprise. Charlotte then asked Luke to help her decide how dark the trunk of her tree should be on the picture she was making. Luke smiled and told her he thought it should be colored darker.

At the discovery center, while the day's snack was being prepared, the children were observed once as they shared utensils and supplies without being prompted.

> Albert and Willie were making pudding for the day's snack. Willie said, "I think the kids will like this, but it sure is messy."

> Albert handed Willie his paper napkin saying, "Here. You need this more than I do."

If a child used one of the manipulatives, such as the kaleidoscope, and another child showed an interest in the object, it was cheerfully shared.

> Suzanne was looking at the kaleidoscope. Kwame asked her what she had. She said, "It's a kaleidoscope, Kwame. You look in it." She then handed it to him and showed him how to close one eye to look through it.

In the music center, children offered to share their pillow if there were not enough for everyone to have one.

> Albert and Willie were in the music room watching a Raffi video together. "Willie, can we share this place to sit?" asked Albert.
>
> "We can. We can share my pillow and both sit right here," answered Willie. Willie stood up and arranged the large pillow so that both boys could sit on it and see the T.V.

While playing group games like twister, children offered to share their color circle. When three children built a large airplane out of blocks, they decided to take turns driving so that all three of them had a turn to be the pilot.

In general, it appears that free choice and ready access to materials led to much child-initiated planning. This, in turn, resulted in the child feeling he/she had control over the activities chosen to participate in. With this feeling of self-direction, the youngsters were free to exhibit prosocial behaviors.

Leadership

On 53 occasions children were observed leading or extending the play of others. In the housekeeping corner, children offered to prepare a meal for someone seated nearby, which added a new dimension to play already in progress.

> Suzanne was cleaning the kitchen in housekeeping. After feeding the baby and putting the groceries away she did some ironing. When she saw Mrs. Ruiz, she said, "Please sit down. Lunch is almost ready. We're having bacon and eggs. Is that all right with you?"

Occasionally, a child noticed that something needed for his or her play was not readily at hand and went to retrieve whatever prop seemed necessary. Willie and Suzanne were working in the home office part of housekeeping. Willie was typing a letter, and Suzanne was answering the telephone and taking messages for other employees.

> Willie turned to Suzanne and said, "I need a stamp for my letter. I want to mail it today."
>
> Suzanne put the phone down and said, "Stamps are in the writing center. I'll go get you one. I'll be right back."

While on the way to another center, a child noticed the general context of play in the housekeeping center and decided to join in and chose to role-play an appropriate character, which kept the general mood of the center intact.

> Zane watched quietly as Christopher played at being a cowboy alone. Zane picked up a badge, walked over to Christopher and said, "Here, Christopher. I'll be the sheriff of Nottingham and you can be a cowboy with me."
>
> As Sarah walked past the housekeeping center, Kwame told her that she was wanted on the telephone.

> On another occasion, Laura was playing in the kitchen of the housekeeping center. She was dusting the furniture as Geoffrey walked by. She picked up the telephone and said, "Geoffrey, the phone is for you." When Geoffrey looked questioningly at her, she said, "It's the car shop. Our car is ready. They want us to go get it."

> Children were asked to play specific parts such as when Matthew was asked to "be the ring bearer at our wedding," and, when a child actively searched for Jeremy, "Jeremy will be our baby. Let's go get him." The entire wedding party then went grocery shopping for reception supplies.

Communication

The researcher observed the children during center/activity time on 34 occasions as they communicated with others in a prosocial manner.

> Alexandra asked Charlie to go with her to her chosen center. Charlie put his arm around her and led the way to the center on her contract.

At the writing center, children noticed someone as he/she walked across the room and extended an invitation to join the writing center. When the children learned how to play tic-tac-toe, they invited another child to play with them.

> At the art table, Zane drew a whole page of tic-tac-toe boards on the back of his drawing. Turning to Albert, Zane said, "Hey, Albert, would you like to play tic-tac-toe? I can show you how to do it.

> Albert smiled and replied, "Yeah. I want to play. Show me how to do it."

In housekeeping, children called out to another child on that side of the room to come join their play. They usually waited as the child cleaned up what he/she had been working on.

> Albert was playing in housekeeping with a group of friends. He saw David playing in the block corner. Albert said, "Come here, David. You can play with us."
>
> David looked at the other children who were all wearing clothes from the dress-up corner and said, "Wait. I need to put on my coat. He took a doctor's lab coat and started to put it on, as Albert turned to the group and said, "Let's wait till David can put on his coat." The group waited while David got dressed to join the play in progress.

In the art center, when children painted, they invited another child to paint with them, or while they worked at a table, if anyone passed by, that person could be invited to "sit down."

> Albert was busy working on a finger painting when Amanda walked past on her way to get a drink at the water fountain. Albert looked up from his work and said, "Sit down, Amanda."

Conversation flowed easily between the children at the table, with the topic centered around friends or marriages. Helping behaviors were evidenced by children who were well underway with their art work and paused to show a new arrival how to do the project at hand.

> Zane was cutting strips of paper at the art table. He noticed that Alfred was having some trouble cutting his strips. Zane stopped working and said, "Look, Alfred. These scissors work best," as he held up a green handled pair.
>
> Alfred took Zane's advice and found that type pair of scissors. "Much better," Alfred agreed. The two boys continued chatting and cutting. Later, Holly and Amanda sat down at the table and looked puzzled about what they should do. Alfred caught the teacher's eye and said, "They just got here. I can tell them what we're supposed to do." The teacher agreed that Alfred could show Holly and Amanda how to cut the paper into strips.

The researcher overheard 34 positive comments as the children discussed one another's final creations and observed the children showing each other their handiwork.

Children in the reading corner invited adults and other children to "sit down and read with me." The participants took turns selecting books to be read together.

While playing in a small group with the teacher, children asked, "Who wants to play this with me?" When they chose someone to play with, children occasionally chose the teacher.

> At the block center, Tommy worked on a building of some sort, stopped, looked around and asked Kwame if he would "want to do this, too?"

Other

Included in this category were the behaviors of teaching someone how to do something, facilitating the group, requesting help and responding to a request in a positive manner. In the art center, on 9 different occasions children were observed either asking for help or responding to such a request.

> "Hey, Scarlett, I don't know how to do this lace-up card thing. Do you want to help me?" asked Laura.
>
> "Of course, I do. Sit right here and I'll show you how. I have a whole set of these at home," said Scarlett.

Empathy

The researcher observed children acting in an empathetic manner on 8 occasions. This indicator of prosocial behavior occurred infrequently, possibly because the children were rarely in distress. On two occasions empathy was observed in the writing center. Both times, the bell had rung for center/activity time to be over and someone did not have time to finish a letter that was being written. The distraught child was comforted by another child.

> "Oh, no!" said Chelsea.
>
> "What's the matter?" asked Maureen.
>
> "I didn't finish my letter to my papa! Oh, no!"
>
> "It's O.K.," said Maureen. "You can finish it quick before the lights flash."

Maureen helped Chelsea address, seal, and deliver the letter to Chelsea's mailbox so it could be taken home.

Prosocial Behaviors During Snack Time

1.b. What kinds of prosocial behaviors do 5-year-olds exhibit during snack time? (See Tables 1, 2, and 3 and Appendix E.)

Daily snack time was a very relaxed, casual occasion for the observed preschoolers. The daily snack helpers set the table and served the snack family style, with pitchers of juice or milk and baskets or plates of food to be passed. Although an adult was seated at the table, the children were really in charge. Because of the pleasant social atmosphere, children conversed in a quiet, natural fashion.

On 70 occasions children helped another person (36%), shared 40 times (20%), communicated prosocially 35 times (18%), sought proximity 23 times (12%), and exhibited leadership 20 times (10%). Other prosocial indicators were negligible.

Helping Behaviors

Snack time also afforded a time for children to help another person on 70 occasions. This particular form of prosocial activity took many different forms. Children offered to return the serving dishes to the kitchen.

> After all of the bread sticks had been eaten, Suzanne offered to take the empty plate back to the kitchen.

The 5-year-olds also offered to serve the other children.

> Charlotte turned to Lily who was sitting next to her. "Can I help you pour your apple juice?" Lily nodded affirmatively. "Here, I'll hold it for you, and you can tell me when there's enough."

The researcher noted that if children were within sight of the kitchen and something was spilled, they left their table to go help in the kitchen. When a child dropped something, whoever was seated closest to where it landed leaned over to retrieve it.

> When Mrs. Lain's empty cup fell on the floor, Charlotte leaned over, picked it up, and threw it away. Then, Charlotte went to the kitchen to get Mrs. Lain a new cup.

If a child was unable to think of the word for what he wanted in the way of condiments, another child patiently named all of the available sources until he knew what he wanted.

> David was trying to ask Charlotte to pass him the biscuits, but he couldn't think of the word. Charlotte said, "Here, David. Do you want some honey? No? How about biscuits?"

> David grinned and said, "Yeah! That's what I needed."
>
> Charlotte answered, smiling, "I thought so!"

On days that food which was difficult to eat was served, children helped each other. One day pancakes were served with plastic knives. The children helped each other cut them into bite-sized pieces.

> When she noticed Lily hesitating to eat, Suzanne offered to show her how to cut the pancakes if she needed help. When Charlotte had trouble cutting the pancakes, Hattie stopped eating to help her.

In the event that a child did not have the full place setting, another child went to the kitchen and got what was needed, usually a napkin or a cup. When the table was missing a chair, someone would go and get one for the table.

> Hattie walked over to the snack table. After seeing that there was no chair for her, Albert walked back to the writing center and got a chair for Hattie. He took it to her and said, "Here, Hattie, have a seat."

While someone experienced difficulty opening a jar or bottle, the child sitting closest would help. On one occasion a child tied the shoelaces of another child while seated at the snack table.

Sharing

Children shared food with others at snack time on 40 occasions. As the children scanned their table and noted that someone did not have juice or the snack, they offered to share theirs.

> Zane looked at Willie's cup and saw that it was empty. "Willie, do you want some juice?" Zane asked.
>
> "Yes, I do," said Willie.
>
> "Here, I'll get it for you," said Zane, as he poured juice into Willie's cup.

Adults as well as children were included in the offer. When it was not obvious that someone needed something, Charlotte asked, "Does anybody else want some popcorn?" Children offered to go to the kitchen for "seconds." If a child was unsure about a particular snack, another child quickly reassured that child that it was okay to eat. When serving snack, if a child saw there was not much food left in the serving dish, he or she left enough for one more person to be served.

> Hattie noticed that Lily had a waffle without syrup, so she left some syrup in the bowl rather than taking all of it.

Children sat next to someone and had their arm around that person's shoulders. Boys and girls kissed other children--it did not seem to matter if the other person was of the same sex or not. The researcher noted such expressions of affection 15 times.

> Albert kissed Hattie three times. Then, Willie kissed Hattie one time, turned and kissed Albert once.

The researcher observed youngsters holding hands under the table. Children also hugged one another while at the snack table. It was not unusual to observe children walking to and from the snack table with their arms around another. Three children held hands as they walked to the table. Boys sat together, laughed, and touched their hands and each other's back as they talked as well as put their arms around another person's chair as they talked to that person. At one point, a boy suggested the group hold hands while saying the blessing.

Communication

The researcher recorded 35 incidents involving positive comments during snack time as she listened to the conversations of the 5-year-old children. Children remarked about how good a particular snack looked. They turned to the person seated next to them and thanked them for something they had done earlier in the day.

> One child was observed saying "I love you" in sign language. The other child understood what he was saying because "my mommy does that to me."

The researcher noted positive comments which were directed to a person whose birthday was being celebrated.

> "Today is Mrs. Lain's birthday," said Albert.
>
> "We're going to sing Happy Birthday to her," said Charlotte.
>
> After the whole group sang to Mrs. Lain, she walked across the room to the kitchen. When she stood in the doorway, the children all said, "I love you, Mrs. Lain."
>
> Charlie turned to the teacher, Miss Owen, and said, "I'm so glad that it's Mrs. Lain's birthday."

Children named all of their school friends and told people who they were going to marry. "I love you" was one of the most often repeated phrases at snack time.

On 27 occasions the researcher found snack time to be a time when children would explain a particular idea to another person.

> When Ebony was not sure if she'd like Bar-B-Que sauce on her chicken nuggets, Albert explained to her, "It's o.k., Ebony. It's just like ketchup but it's spicy." Ebony tasted the sauce and liked it after all.

With very little adult intervention, the children decided how to carry on with the business of having a snack. One of the children decided that anyone who had already had seconds should raise his or her hand so he was able to count how many more servings were needed.

> Hattie looked around the room to be sure everyone had been served,and then remarked, "See, it's okay. We can go get more chicken nuggets, now."

Snack time also provided an opportunity for children to explain table manners they had learned to one another. For example, "Don't talk with your mouth full," and "I would say no, thank you, if I didn't want any food. I wouldn't take it." The impromptu instructions seemed to help children act more politely.

In general, snack time seemed to be an ideal opportunity for children to help another person, share, and communicate prosocially. Snack time was an unstructured but organized part of the day.

Prosocial Behaviors During Outdoor Play Time

1.c. What kinds of prosocial behaviors do
5-year-olds exhibit during outdoor play time?
(See Tables 1, 2, and 3 and Appendix E.)

Outdoor play time at this preschool was approximately equivalent to snack time. The researcher observed 115 prosocial behaviors during outdoor play time which warranted the following observations.

During the 19 hours of outdoor play time there were 59 incidents of proximity seeking (51%), 18 incidents of helping (16%), 15 incidents of sharing (13%), 11 incidents of leadership (10%), and 5 incidents of communication (4%). Other indicators of prosocial behavior were negligible.

The researcher observed proximity seeking, another prosocial behavior, during outdoor play time a total of 59 times. In the preschool, numbers of children at particular areas are controlled by the use of colored clothes pins that the children wear. When all of the clothes pins are taken, the center is full and the child must go somewhere else. Perhaps because there were no clothes pins to regulate the number of participants, children felt a bit more free to self-select partners and chose from all the children in their color group, not just the four or five usually at their center. Sometimes a child noticed someone sitting alone and sat down next to that person.

> When Suzanne didn't feel well, she sat on a bench. Albert left the swings to see why Suzanne

> wasn't playing with the rest of the children. Albert sat next to Suzanne for the rest of the play time.

The researcher observed children as they traded game pieces in order to be on the same team as a person with whom they wanted to be.

> "Here, Charlie," said Willie, "get a blue one (colored chip) so we can play together."
>
> Charlie looked around, smiled, and said, "O.K.--we're buddies, right?"
>
> Willie nodded, saying, "Yeah--buddy!"

Many children asked another child if he or she would agree to marry them, and most children agreed to marry whomever asked them.

The researcher also observed children pairing off into twosomes on 11 separate occasions. The entire group was available at outdoor play time, and all of the equipment was available for use, but many children preferred to play with just one special friend. Children looked across the playground, saw someone, and ran across the lawn to him or her.

> Albert saw Suzanne on the tricycle. He left the fort where he had been playing and climbed on the back of the tricycle with Suzanne. "You pedal and I'll push," he told her.

Tricycles, swings, and the seesaws encouraged play by twosomes. Sometimes when children wanted to be alone with another child they used the playhouse, a hula hoop, or a corner of the playground to cordon off a small space for privacy.

> Laura and Ebony wanted to be together so they picked up a hula hoop; both stepped inside it and held it at waist-level. This gave them the "privacy" they wanted for a quiet conversation.

The researcher noted a great deal of physical contact (25 instances) on the way to and from the playground. Holding hands was common for students and teachers. It is interesting to note that while teachers were never observed reaching for a child's hand, the children often reached for a teacher's hand. The children also hugged each other while lining up.

> As Albert put an arm around Lucas in line, he said, "This is my friend." On another occasion Albert took Jack's hands and pretended to dance joyously with him.

As they ran or walked up or down the hill on the big playground, children usually held hands in pairs.

> Ebony took Laura's hand as they walked up the hill to play with the parachute.

Helping

The children were observed helping another person 18 times or 16% of the time.

> "Here, Maureen, I'll push you on the swing. My daddy used to push me when I was little like you," said Albert as he began to push Maureen.

Children noticed when someone else could possibly be in danger and quickly offered help.

> "Hey, Laura. Did you know your shoe is untied? You could trip and fall. If you come over here, I'll tie it for you," said Charlotte.

Sharing

Incidents of sharing were observed on 15 occasions, a total of 13% of the outdoor play time prosocial behaviors.

There were two tricycles and a wagon available to the children. There were usually 13 to 15 children playing on the playground at a time so the children often shared the playground equipment with each other.

> "Here, Albert. I'll let you steer while I push," said Jason.
>
> "O.K., let me sit here and you can get behind me," agreed Albert.

Leadership

Incidents of leadership were observed 11 times, a total of 10% of the total prosocial behaviors observed during outdoor play time.

> "I know," said Albert. "Let's all play freeze tag. Charlotte can be the monster first."

Communication

Incidents of prosocial communication were observed on 5 occasions comprising 4% of the outdoor play-time observations. The children noticed what the others were dong, and if someone was not playing, it was noticed.

> "Hey, Scarlett. Don't you want to play today?" asked Laura. Scarlett was seated on a bench while watching the children playing.
>
> "No, I believe I'll just rest a bit. I've had a busy day," answered Scarlett.
>
> "Oh. O.K. Hey, Scarlett, watch me hula hoop. O.K?" said Laura as she walked over to the hula hoop.

"Sure," said Scarlett.

In conclusion, while looking at prosocial behaviors exhibited by 5-year-olds during three curricular contexts, empathy occurred relatively evenly across all centers. Sharing and helping occurred predominately at center/ activity and snack times. Communicating occurred most at snack time, followed by activity time and very little at outdoor play. Half the proximity seeking occurred at outdoor play and most of the rest at activity time. Half the leadership was at center time followed by snack and outdoor play. When time spent at each center was considered as a factor, 40% of the children's prosocial behavior occurred at center/activity time, 33% was at snack time, and outdoor play time accounted for only 26% of the prosocial behaviors.

Prosocial Behaviors Between 5-Year-Olds, Adults, Peers, and Younger Children

The second research question was concerned with the kinds of prosocial interactions that occurred between 5-year-olds and adults, peers, and younger children.

In this mixed-age group of preschoolers, 5-year-old children had opportunities to interact with adults, peers, and younger children. As can be seen on Table 6, the 5-year-old children interacted prosocially equally with adults, peers, and younger children when scores were weighted. The most typical prosocial behaviors directed toward adults occurred as the children shared something, communicated

Table 6

Frequency of Observed Prosocial Behavior of 5-Year-Olds Related to Research Question 2, March 18, 1992, to June 29, 1992 (Adult, Peer, and Younger)

	6 Adults			25 Peers			14 Younger		
	No.	%	Weighted Score	No.	%	Weighted Score	No.	%	Weighted Score
Empathy	--	--	--	10	3	.40	6	2	.42
Sharing	30	34	5.00	65	17	2.60	3	13	2.69
Helping	13	15	2.17	103	27	4.12	75	29	5.36
Communication	20	22	3.33	42	11	1.68	12	5	.86
Proximity Seeking	13	15	2.17	101	28	4.04	84	32	6.00
Leadership	7	7	1.67	37	10	1.48	40	15	2.86
Other	6	6	1.00	18	5	.72	9	3	.64
Total	89	12	14.83	376	51	15.04	261	35	18.64
		99			101			99	

prosocially, helped an adult, or sought proximity with an adult.

Of the 45-member total population, adults were 13% of the population observed, peers were 55% of the population and younger children were 31%. Since the children had over 4 times as much opportunity to interact with younger children as they did with adults, the scores were weighted by dividing the number of observations by the number of people in each group. Adult interactions were divided by 6; peer interactions by 25, and younger child interactions by 14. Balancing the number of prosocial behaviors observed within the possibilities for interactions, we see that, overall, the subjects had proportionally slightly more prosocial interactions with younger children than they did with peers or adults. The nature of those interactions is interesting. They shared things twice as often with adults as with other children. The 5-year-olds helped younger children the most and their peers twice as often as adults. Their prosocial communication was three times more with adults than with younger children and twice as often with peers as with younger children. They sought to be near younger children three times as much as with adults and near their peers twice as often as with adults. Not surprisingly, the 5-year-olds assumed leadership roles with younger children more than they did with peers or adults. Therefore, these children interacted in a prosocial manner proportionally most with younger children, then peers, and least with adults. These proportions are approximately aligned with regard to representation.

	Adult	Peer	Younger
No. of interactions	89	376	26
Percent of interactions	12%	51%	35%
Population percentage	13%	55%	31%

Because there were different numbers of adults, peers, and younger children, that data must also be interpreted by analyzing the number of behaviors that occurred proportional to the number of different-aged people available to interact with. By dividing the number of observations of each prosocial behavior with adults by 6, we obtain a weighted score by which we can compare the number of occurrences of prosocial behavior adjusted by the number of adults available. The number of prosocial behaviors with peers was divided by 25, and the number of prosocial behaviors with younger children was divided by 14. With the weighted scores, prosocial behaviors may be compared with no differences of population representation.

These children's prosocial behaviors were directed toward adults on 89 occasions, or 12% of the time; toward peers on 376 occasions, or 51% of the time; and toward younger children on 261 occasions, or 35% of the time.

This preschool had a total population of 46 people. There were 6 teachers, 25 peers (5-year-olds), and 14 younger children. When the total preschool population is considered, some very interesting patterns emerge. The most frequent prosocial behavior observed was proximity seeking as the 5-year-olds sought out younger children to be with. The next most frequent behavior was helping, again with 5-year-olds choosing to help younger children. Helping between peers and proximity seeking among peers was observed slightly less than between 5-year-olds and younger children, although the two occurred with close frequency, helping was 4.12 and proximity seeking was 4.04.

The most frequently observed prosocial behavior between 5-year-olds and adults was sharing at 5.0, followed by communication at 3.33. According to the weighted scores (Table 6), children shared almost twice as much with adults as either younger or peers, although they shared slightly more with the younger children. The 5-year-olds helped younger children more than twice as much as they helped adults, although they helped their peers almost twice as much as they helped adults. The 5-year-olds communicated with adults almost four times as much as with younger children and communicated with peers not quite twice as often as younger children. Proximity seeking occurred least of all with adults, almost twice as often with peers, and slightly less than three times as often with younger children. Leadership occurred most frequently with younger children, about half as often with peers, and slightly more than half as often with adults. "Other" indicators of prosocial behavior were negligible across the three age groups.

When Corsaro (1985) enlarged the constructivist approach by showing how "children not only act on their environment, they participate in a social world" (p. 73), he could have very easily used examples such as those noted in this preschool setting where children negotiated, problem solved, and assumed leadership positions as they participated in the "social world" of preschool. It was very rare for a child to be prosocial without interacting with another person, either verbally or nonverbally. A child would possibly be prosocial independent of other people in the instance of "giving aid unknown to another," but this happened very rarely--once during activity time and once during snack time. In the majority of instances, prosocial behavior occurred during activities in which the child was actively involved, at center/activity time, snack time, or outdoor play time, and they occurred while interacting with others. The children continually shaped or changed their environment, depending on with whom they interacted. There were many possibilities for interaction between peers, younger children, and adults.

According to Table 6, the children were most often (261 observations, weighted score of 18.64) prosocial with younger children, then peers (376 observations, weighted score of 15.04). It is very likely that the interactions between 5-year-olds and adults are underrepresented because there are so many more opportunities for interactions with other children since there are fewer adults with whom to interact. The 89 interactions with adults (weighted score of 14.83) tended to involve sharing, helping, communicating, and proximity seeking. Most of the individual interactions seemed to involve approval seeking, with the child using prosocial behavior in a effort to initiate contact with the adult. An example was when a child eagerly showed the teacher something he had made in the art center. The children often used prosocial behavior as a bridge to open up communication and initiate an interaction with the adult.

When the 5-year-olds interacted prosocially with younger children, it was usually helping behavior (75 times, weighted score of 5.36). The children helped their younger friends with tasks and often taught them "how to" do something. The older children often sought to make contact physically with the younger children. Marriage between 5-year-olds and younger children was a popular topic.

When 5-year-olds interacted prosocially with peers, the interaction was often proximity-seeking behavior (101 times, weighted score of 4.04). The children chose to be with another person. Helping behavior was also dominant as the children helped each other with tasks. The 5-year-olds shared with each other and made positive comments directed toward each other.

In looking at the weighted differences among prosocial behaviors between 5-year-olds and adults, sharing was far greater (5.00) than any other. Communication was the next most prevalent (3.33). Helping and proximity seeking were each 2.17. Other kinds of prosocial behavior between 5-year-olds and adults were negligible.

Table 7

Results of T-Test for Significance. Frequency of Observed Prosocial Behavior of 5-Year-Olds Related to Research Question 2, March 18, 1992, to June 29, 1992 (Adult, Peer, and Younger)

	6 Adults			25 Peers			14 Younger			
			Weighted			Weighted			Weighted	Overall
	No.	%	Score	No.	%	Score	No.	%	Score	Mean
Empathy	--	--	--	10	3	.40	6	2	.42	.27
Sharing	30	34	5.00	65	17	2.60	3	13	2.69	3.43
Helping	13	15	2.17	103	27	4.12	75	29	5.36	3.88
Communication	20	22	3.33	42	11	1.68	12	5	.86	1.96
Proximity Seeking	13	15	2.17	101	28	4.04	84	32	6.00	4.07
Leadership	7	7	1.67	37	10	1.48	40	15	2.86	2.00
Other	6	6	1.00	18	5	.72	9	3	.64	.79
Total	89	12	14.83	376	51	15.04	261	35	18.64	
		99			101			99		

No Significance

When a t-test for significance was used for prosocial interactions between 5-year-olds and adults, peers, and younger children, no significance was found. This clearly shows that the 5-year-olds did not interact with any one age group significantly more or less than any other age group.

Prosocial Behaviors Between 5-Year-Olds and Adults

The researcher will now discuss the observed prosocial behaviors relative to 5-year-olds and their interactions with adults.

2.a. What kinds of prosocial behaviors do 5-year-olds exhibit during interactions with adults? (See Tables 6 and 7 and Appendix E.)

Sharing

Children gave adults flowers that they had picked outside, letters they had written, pictures they had drawn, or toys they had removed from one of the centers. The researcher observed these behaviors a total of 30 times (33% of the observed prosocial behaviors between 5-year-olds and adults).

Prosocial Communication

Children made positive comments directed toward the adults on 20 separate occasions. Sometimes children thanked the adults for the nice things they did for them, told the teachers that they liked the materials they had prepared for them, or related to the adults how much they liked all of the children at the school. Special secrets about a friend were sometimes shared with the teacher. It was not unusual to hear a child say "I love you" to the teacher.

> Will, who was seated next to Miss Brown at snack time, turned to her and said, "I love you, Miss Brown."
>
> When she answered, "I love you, too," Willie told her he wanted to enjoy his snack with her.

Helping

The 5-year-olds were observed helping an adult of 13 occasions. These incidents occurred (14%) as the children saw that it was possible to do something helpful for one of the six teachers at the preschool.

> "Mrs. Lain, I'll carry the books outside for you," said Albert.
>
> "They're awfully heavy, Albert. Ar you sure you can lift them?" answered Mrs. Lain.
>
> "Well, I don't know if I can or not, but I'll sure try!" said Albert.

Proximity Seeking

On 13 occasions (14%) the 5-year-olds sought proximity with adults. Saving a seat for an adult, asking to stay with an adult, sitting next to an adult, and talking about marriage to an adult were all observed during the research investigation.

In summary, prosocial interactions between adults and 5-year-olds primarily consisted of sharing, communication, helping, and proximity seeking.

Prosocial Behaviors Between 5-Year-Olds and Peers

2.b. What kinds of prosocial behaviors do 5-year-olds exhibit during interactions with peers? (See Tables 6 and 7 and Appendix E.)

Many times sharing occurred between peers. On 65 occasions the children shared with their peers. The children seemed to gravitate toward other children who were functioning on approximately the same level. After talking to several parents about the prosocial behavior of their 5-year-olds, the researcher discovered that the parents of the children often arranged outings with the other members of their child's group. Along with birthday parties and college functions, the group usually met once a week in a park where the children played while the mothers talked. The entire group then went to McDonald's for lunch before going to preschool. The parents shared with each other, again modeling prosocial behavior for the children to imitate. On many occasions, videotapes, games, and books were exchanged among families as the children brought the items to school in order to send them home with another child. The children used mailboxes next to the door as the drop-off site for the exchanged materials.

In looking at the weighted differences among 5-year-olds and their peers, helping was the most prevalent (4.12), then proximity seeking (4.40), and then sharing (2.60) and communication (1.68). Other kinds of prosocial behavior were negligible.

The researcher will now discuss the observed prosocial behaviors relative to 5-year-olds and their interactions with peers.

These 5-year-olds interacted prosocially 376 times with their peers. In determining the kinds of prosocial behaviors 5-year-olds exhibited during interactions with peers, the researcher noted two significant forms of prosocial behavior. Helping and proximity seeking were observed far more than other behaviors (103 and 101 times, 27% and 26% of the peer observations). Sharing was observed 65 times (17%) between peers. Positive comments were overheard on 42 occasions, comprising 11% of the observed prosocial behaviors.

Helping

On 49 occasions the researcher observed these children as they helped their peers do tasks. For example, children helped to pick up something that had dropped, handed someone needed supplies, assisted with clean up of a center where they had not played, returned materials to their proper place, helped a child decide which center to visit next, directed a child to move correctly during a game, retrieved misplaced objects for another child, showed someone how to hold his/her card correctly at table games, held something while another child used it, read names on mailboxes as they inserted letters together, wrote names another child could not spell, reminded children of the procedures for a given center and daily "jobs," assisted others as they cleaned up, gave advice on how pictures should be painted, facilitated children as they climbed onto outdoor equipment, cut difficult food items at snack time, turned pages as they read a book together, and made art projects that required manual dexterity. All in all, the children helped peers do many tasks that they could have done alone.

Along with helping their peers, there was also a protective nature to this help. On 20 occasions, children tried to protect their peers from possible danger.

> Zane tied Charlotte's shoes so she wouldn't trip. When Laura said, "I need my shoe tied," Ebony responded, "I can tie."
>
> After Ebony tied Laura's shoe for her, Laura exclaimed, "Wow! She's good! She can tie everybody's."
>
> Children also helped someone who had fallen down.
>
> Charlotte was observed as she told Willie not to get off the seesaw too fast "because someone might get hurt."

The researcher observed other examples of helping as children placed plastic knives safely in the middle of the table, helped a child put a hurt thumb under cold water and told children to "watch where you are going." These children seemed to view the environment almost as an adult would. They noted safety hazards and protected children from what could happen if they were not careful.

> Suzanne saw Kevin climbing on the swing set. "Come down quick before you hurt yourself," she told him.
>
> On another occasion, Charlotte told Laura she should "wear goggles while you work with a hammer." Laura picked up the goggles and put them on.

Proximity Seeking

The children used many strategies to get closer to each other. A total of 50 observed incidents resulted in different proximity-seeking behaviors. A common theme during peer interactions was marriage. The children asked each other if they would consent to marriage.

> Willie got down on one knee in front of the chair where Laura was seated and asked her to marry him.

A child asked a particular child where he/she planned to go during activity time. That child then adjusted plans accordingly so that he/she could be with his/her friend. The children looked around the room, saw a friend and ran over to be with that person.

> Ebony was looking for Suzanne during activity time. She spotted her standing across the room in the reading corner. Ebony immediately ran over to her and took her hand. "Let's read together," she told Suzanne.
>
> "O.K.," Suzanne answered.

The children also asked friends if they could sit together. Some outdoor activities lent themselves to proximity-seeking behavior. For example, the seesaw, the tire swing, and the playhouse were typically used by more than one child at a time. One child was initially at the equipment and another child joined.

> Hattie was at the art table, tearing pieces of tissue paper. Albert stood next to an empty chair for a moment. When he sat down, Hattie helped him get started on the art project.

When a child walked past a particular center, often times other children called out to him or her, pointed to an empty chair, and invited that child to join the group.

> When Suzanne saw that Amanda didn't have a center to go to, she told Amanda to "come here," as she gave her chair to Amanda and got another one for herself.

The children also saved seats for their friend if they left the group momentarily, such as when they visited the bathroom, washed their hands at the sink, or put something in their cubby.

> Charlotte made sure Justin's chair was still there while he went to the bathroom to wash the fingerpaint off his hands.

Children occasionally said, "I want to go wherever my friend is going."

> Albert and Hattie were in the block center together for about 15 minutes. When the teacher asked them if they had planned to go there together, they both answered, "Yes." When she asked them, "Why?" Albert answered, "Because we're best friends."

Sharing

The 5-year-olds shared in a variety of ways with their peers on 24 occasions. Children shared writing utensils, pillows to sit on, sleeping bags, books to be read together, snack items, gifts brought from home for the whole group to share, easels to paint on together (even when there were enough for individual work), and seesaws and tricycles on the playground. Children not only shared when sufficient supplies were not readily available but also when there was an adequate supply.

> Charlotte and Ebony were at the art center. The other children were painting at easels. There were two easels not being used, but the girls decided to paint together at the same easel, using one piece of paper.

The observed children did not seem to wait for acknowledgment of their generosity.

Positive Comments

The researcher recorded a total of 42 positive comments heard between peers.

> While the children were making hand-print aprons, Ebony said, "I want to put my hand-print next to Laura's. She's my friend."

Children thanked each other for helping to clean up a center. The children also complimented each other. When parents came to pick up their children, the children often told their parents what they did with their "best friend" at school today.

> Children put puzzles together while another child watched and said, "Wow! You did it!"

The exclamation "I love you" was exchanged between peers. The children also made positive remarks about the materials they used during group time. Remarks about how everyone enjoyed snack, such as, "This table sure likes jello!" echoed daily. The children also noticed and remarked about new haircuts and clothes of their own and of their friends.

In summary, it was found that peers helped another, sought proximity, shared, and communicated in a prosocial manner.

Prosocial Behaviors Between 5-Year-Olds and Younger Children

2.c. What kinds of prosocial behaviors do 5-year-olds exhibit during interactions with younger children? (See Tables 6 and 7 and Appendix E.)

In looking at the weighted differences among 5-year-olds and younger children, proximity seeking was most prevalent (6.00), then helping (5.36), followed by leadership (2.86). Other indicators of prosocial behavior were negligible.

The researcher will now discuss the observed prosocial behaviors relative to 5-year-olds and their interactions with younger children.

There were 261 prosocial behaviors exhibited by 5-year-olds during interactions with younger children in this mixed-aged preschool setting. The researcher noted evidence of proximity seeking, helping, and leadership behaviors.

Proximity Seeking

Proximity seeking was observed 84 times (32%) between the 5-year-olds and younger children. Hand holding was popular, as either pairs or groups of three held hands.

> While seated on the couch as they looked at books, Lily laid her head down on Charlotte's lap.

Children held hands under the table, and they held hands while participating in an organized group game.

> Suzanne held hands with Alexandra and brushed the younger child's hair back as they played "Mother May I?"

Older children held hands with younger children on their way to the playground or another location.

> While walking to the Planetarium on a field trip, Charlie held Alexandra's hand.

The 5-year-old children took the hands of a younger child and pretended to dance. While standing in line, older children put their arms around younger children and picked them up. As they sat on the floor and looked at something with another child, the older child often put his/her arm around the younger child.

> Charlotte put her arms around Lily at the book corner. Together, the two girls made plans to play together outside.

When older children showed younger children something in another area, they held hands as they walked together across the room. Likewise, children held hands with younger children as they walked to snack.

> Laura held hands with David as they walked to the table for snack. "Let's sit together, David, O.K.?" asked Laura.
>
> "O.K.," answered David.

If a child was asked to find a younger child so he/she could see the teacher for a minute, the older child led the younger child back to the teacher by holding hands.

> Zane was sitting next to Jack at the puzzle table when it was time for Jack to go to see the teacher. Zane led Jack to the teacher while holding his hand.

Helping

On 75 occasions or 28% of the time, the researcher observed 5-year-olds helping younger children do a task. The children showed younger children where things were stored, how things worked (like a cash register in the grocery store), helped a child pour juice, moved things so they would be within easy reach, looked at books together, retrieved dropped objects, manipulated clothes pins at activity centers, tried to help others figure out how to play a game, read the instructions aloud while playing games on the computer, instructed children in how to "buy" food at the grocery store using play money and coupons, gave geographical directions to specific centers, procured necessary supplies, held projects while a younger child worked on them, spelled names and words while a younger child typed, and sorted crayons by color.

Leadership

Leadership behaviors were observed on 40 occasions (15% of the prosocial interactions between 5-year-olds and younger children).

The 5-year-olds directed outdoor games during recess, reminded the others of accepted protocol and rules, and encouraged participation in the activities.

In summary, while observing the prosocial behavior noted of 5-year-old children toward younger children, the primary kinds of behavior included proximity seeking, helping, and leadership.

Prosocial Behavior in Curricular Contexts with Adults, Peers, and Younger Children

After discussing the reported incidents of prosocial behavior in the three curricular contexts and between adults, peers, and younger children, the researcher went back to the data to determine how many prosocial behaviors occurred between 5-year-olds and adults, peers, and younger children during center/activity time, snack time, and outdoor play time. Further analysis showed the number of prosocial behaviors observed between 5-year-olds and adults, peers, and younger children at each of the 16 individual activity areas.

The researcher went back to the individual coding forms of observed prosocial behavior and tabulated the reports according to adult, peer, or younger-child interactions for the three curricular contexts and each of the individual center/activity areas. This resulted in Table 8.

When scores were weighted for population, overall, the most prosocial behavior occurred slightly more with younger children, then peers, and least with adults. However, these differences were not significant. There were four times as many prosocial behaviors between peers as between 5-year-olds and adults. There were almost three times as many prosocial behaviors between 5-year-olds and younger children when compared to adults.

In every instance, center/activity time, snack time, and outdoor play time, there were fewer prosocial interactions with adults than peers or younger children. During outdoor play, the target children interacted 10 times more often with younger children than with adults and almost 8 times more often with peers than with adults. Likewise, at snack time the targeted children interacted prosocially with peers 12 times more than with adults. During this same snack time,

Table 8

Prosocial Behaviors with Adults, Peers, and Younger Children in Different Curricular Contexts, March 18, 1992, to June 29, 1992 (37 hours)

Curricular Context	No. of Behaviors with 6 Adults	No. of Behaviors with 25 Peers	No. of Behaviors with 14 Younger Children	Total
Center/Activity Time	73	206	136	415
Snack Time	10	123	63	96
Outdoor Play	6	47	62	115
Total	89	376	261	726
Center Activities:				
Construction	3	21	14	38
blocks	3	17	12	32
table toys	0	4	2	6
Pretend Play	3	18	12	33
housekeeping	2	17	10	29
grocery	1	1	2	4
puppets	0	0	0	0
Individual	0	6	5	11
listening	0	1	2	3
computer	0	5	3	8

Table 8--continued.

Curricular Context	No. of Behaviors with 6 Adults	No. of Behaviors with 25 Peers	No. of Behaviors with 14 Younger Children	Total
Process	4	10	16	30
reading	1	5	15	21
music	3	5	1	9
Creating	33	96	47	176
writing	11	60	19	90
art	19	27	18	64
woodworking	3	9	10	22
Manipulatives	10	18	20	48
puzzles	1	4	2	7
discovery	7	8	6	21
water play	2	6	12	20
Other/Small Group	20	37	22	79
Total No. 415 Group	73	206	136	415

peers were interacted with prosocially almost twice as often as younger children.

The researcher will now describe the different prosocial behaviors demonstrated by 5-year-olds with adults, peers, and younger children within specific types of centers. The targeted children interacted with peers in the construction center a third more than younger children and seven times more than adults. The construction center relied more on skill than other centers. The children tended to want to build things with others who were physically able to help. Adult interactions were minimal (3 in blocks, 0 in table toys) possibly because there no adult was assigned to either area. The adults floated among several centers in these two construction areas.

At the pretend play centers, most interactions occurred between peers (18), then younger children (12), and least with adults (3). The adult in this area floated between housekeeping, the grocery store, blocks, and puppets, which explained the low incidence of interactions with adults. Again, most of the 5-year-olds interacted with peers, possibly because there were more peers to interact with.

In the individual centers (listening and computer) the interactions were fairly consistent among the children--6 peer interactions and 5 with younger children--although no interactions occurred between the 5-year-olds and the adults. Usually, one child in the center knew how to use the materials (either the computer or the cassette player). This child helped the others at the center. More interaction occurred at the computer (8) as compared to the cassette player (3) probably because more children needed help with the computer since not everyone has one at home. More interactions between peers at the computer (5) than younger children (3) were attributed to fewer younger children being interested in the computer. Many more younger children frequented the listening center which accommodated six children than the computer which had one chair.

The process centers (reading and music) had the most interactions between the targeted children and younger children (16) than peers (10) and least with adults (4). The 15 instances of 5-year-olds interacting with younger children in the reading center is interesting. The older children preferred reading to someone as opposed to reading with someone, which happened between peers on 5 occasions. The children only read with an adult 1 time. However, at music the children interacted with peers 5 times and with a younger child only once. The researcher got the impression that the fast pace of music left little time to help a younger child. The children did interact with adults 3 times at music, but all 3 times an adult was shown how to do something, not really to help the adult.

The creating centers (writing, art, and woodworking) led to the most interactions overall. Peer interactions were most prevalent (96), then younger children (47), and then adults (33). In the writing center, peer interactions occurred three times more than interactions with younger children and six times more than interactions with adults. In art, however, the frequency of interactions between 5-year-olds and either peers (19) or younger children (18) were relatively equal. The peer interactions at the art center occurred a third more often with 27 prosocial behaviors charted. In the woodworking center, peer interactions (9) were relatively the same as younger child interactions (10), which were three times as prevalent as interactions with adults (3). It is surprising that there were only 3 prosocial interactions with adults since an adult was always at that center. The children at woodworking seemed very intent on the "real work" they were doing and seldom stopped working except to get or share tools or supplies.

In the manipulatives centers (puzzles, discovery, and water play) one adult usually stayed at discovery but kept an eye on puzzles and water play. This would explain why there were 7 interactions with adults at the discovery center, only 2 at water play, and just 1 at puzzles. The 5-year-olds interacted fairly equally with peers (18) and younger children (20) and half as often (10) with adults. Differences emerge at individual manipulative centers. Peers interacted twice as often (4) at puzzles as with younger children (2). Peers interacted at discovery 25% more (8) than younger children (6) but almost the same as with adults (7).

There were twice as many interactions between the 5-year-olds and younger children (12) as peers (6) at water play. The low incidence of 2 interactions with adults is probably attributed to the adult only being available occasionally, since she floated among several centers.

At small group there was always an adult present which is probably why there were more adult interactions in this center than an other (20). The targeted children interacted with peers almost twice as often (37) as with younger children (22) almost the same as with the adults (20).

There were more peer interactions than with younger children in the construction, pretend play, individual creating, and small group centers. More interactions occurred with 5-year-olds and younger children in the process and manipulatives centers.

Triangulation of Data

The researcher will now specify how triangulation helped to "make sense" of each prosocial behavior. Along with observations, the researcher incorporated teacher interviews and parent interviews.

Teacher Interviews

Every day after the children were dismissed, the entire teaching staff met together to discuss the day's prosocial observations. The researcher explained each occurrence on the coding sheets. At this time, the staff was asked to confirm or disconfirm each observed behavior. If a teacher knew of something that preceded the episode, it was discussed. Likewise, if a teacher knew of something pertaining to the observation that occurred at a later time, it was mentioned. The staff was encouraged to articulate general impressions and feelings. If a teacher knew of extenuating circumstances which would make a particular observation nonprosocial, it was noted on the coding sheet and not included in later tabulations.

The researcher took notes of everything said during the meeting. She wanted to be sure that similar prosocial behaviors were occurring in the other two groups (red and yellow), not just in the group being observed. This also helped to make all of the staff members feel like they were contributing to the project. The researcher did not want anyone to feel left out because their particular group was not being studied.

Each group had stickers for abbreviated prosocial behavior documentation. The researcher found that providing these stickers and checking to be sure they were used correctly led to better discussions during the debriefing meeting. The use of these stickers encouraged the staff to be more aware of the prosocial behaviors among all of the preschool participants. At the conclusion of the meeting, the researcher talked informally to the participants as they adhered the individual stickers to the appropriate child's anecdotal file folder. It soon became apparent that lots of stickers were needed. The researcher placed five sets with individual group members' names on a clipboard. The clipboards were checked daily to see if more stickers were needed and hung on the wall next to the mail boxes. The staff members carried these clipboards with them during the day and then brought them to the meeting. By this time, all of the adults in the preschool were carrying clipboards, so it was accepted by the adults (by now they were all "teacher/ researchers") and by the children. The researcher believes giving the staff members such "tools" made them more interested and their verbal contributions more valuable.

Parent Interviews

The parents were given an open-ended questionnaire, the Parental Reporting of Prosocial Behavior (Appendix B). Of the 38 families enrolled, 22 returned the form. The researcher was looking for evidence that the children discussed at home prosocial interactions which occurred at the preschool. All of the parents wrote on the sheet what the child said about school, friends, or adults. Most of the children mentioned specific friends. A sample of the reported prosocial behavior follows:

"Maggie is my best friend. She's nice."

"Jackie waved to me. He's my friend."

4-year-old girl

> "Mommy, I love Alexandra. She's my friend. I love her Baby Alive."
>
> 3-year-old girl

One parent reported the following:

> "I like Scarlett and Charlotte because they are girls. They like to sit by me and they are nice to me. They run over to me and give me a big hug."
>
> "I like all teachers because they teach me new things I don't know."
>
> "I love Maeve because she is so little--she's even littler than me."
>
> 4-year-old girl

Another parent reported that her daughter said,

> "Maureen wasn't in school today. I missed her. Charlotte got sent home. She didn't feel good. She had a pink eye and it really hurt."
>
> "I got to be snack helper today. Dr. Ross says, 'No more spills!'"
>
> "Charlotte gave me this ring. She and Maureen are my best friends."
>
> "I'm going to marry Trevor. Or maybe Albert."
>
> "I helped feed the fish. That's my favorite thing to help with."
>
> "I want my friends to meet my new brother."
>
> 4-year-old girl

One parent, who happened to be a college student, elaborated in her response,

> Ebony said, "I sat by Chelsea at snack time, and group time but I didn't sit by her at journal time cause it was girl/boy, girl/boy." I asked Ebony why she sat by Chelsea and she said, "Chelsea is my bestest buddy." I also asked her, does she have a favorite teacher and if so, why? She answered, "I love Miss Olsen cause she loves me." I asked, "How do you know she loves you?" She simply replied,

> "Cause she told me." She also said that Mrs. Kane and Miss Wills are her favorites. Her favorite duty is being the snack helper.
>
> 5-year-old girl
>
> "I like to play with Lucas."
>
> "Dr. Ross and Miss Sligh are my friends and are coming to my party."
>
> 3-year-old boy
>
> "I love school so much!"
>
> "I love my teachers too!"
>
> 4-year-old boy
>
> "I played with Ryan at blocks time."
>
> "Miss Garvey and Miss Kane, I like them."
>
> 5-year old boy

The researcher compared her observations of prosocial behavior to the written perceptions of the preschoolers' parents and the other staff members. It appears to this researcher that the observations were further substantiated by the parents and staff members.

CHAPTER V
INTERPRETATION OF DATA AND CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study was twofold: first, to identify the kinds of prosocial behavior exhibited by preschool-aged children during center/activity time, snack time, and outdoor play time and, second, to determine the kinds of interactions that occur between 5-year-olds and adults, peers, or younger children. Researchers for a long time have studied children's prosocial behavior but not different curricular contexts. This study sought to link theory to practice, providing information to preschool teachers, educators, and college professors.

In order to identify different prosocial behaviors, the researcher was a participant observer in one mixed-age preschool for 15 weeks, 87 hours total, starting in March and ending in June. Other data gathering techniques included informal interviews with the director, parents, teachers, support teachers, students, field notes, and examination of the children's anecdotal records.

Throughout the period of study, time distribution for the three targeted observations held constant. For the most part, the class followed the posted daily schedule.

Importance of Prosocial Behavior

Peer relations are very important. Social and cognitive development both depend on peer relationships which subsequently contribute to the effectiveness of adult functioning. According to Hartup (1991), children who are not liked by other children and are unable to form close relationships with others are seriously at risk.

Children who are able to exhibit prosocial behaviors are more likely to be chosen as play partners, which adds to their social and cognitive growth. According to Hartup (1991), "Children with friends are better off than children without friends" (p. 2).

Prior to this study, adults did not really know what happened in different curricular contexts. We now know that teachers need to plan for social development in all curricular contexts. The social development does not need to be exclusive of planned cognitive development activities. In fact, they occur naturally throughout the day and should be planned with that goal in mind.

Conclusions

Educators tend to think of the purpose of playground time for social development and the purpose of activity centers for cognitive development. The results of this study suggest otherwise. Even when weighted for the amount of time spend in these curricular contexts, children were 1-1/2 times more prosocial at activity centers. Snack time is often overlooked as instructional time, yet when snack is served and the children are seated family style, there are more prosocial behaviors during snack time than on the playground. Interesting, too, is the fact that the kinds of prosocial behavior differed somewhat in these three curricular contexts. Center/activity time fostered sharing, helping, proximity seeking, and leadership. Children shared, helped, and communicated a great deal during snack time. On the playground proximity seeking was the only prosocial behavior that exceeded snack or activity time.

Within the curricular context of activities, the creating-type centers had by far the most interactions, more than twice as many total as any others (176). Small group with the teacher had the next most (79), followed by manipulatives (48). Three of the centers had similar levels of prosocial behavior--construction (38), pretend play (33), and process centers (30). The individual centers had the least prosocial behavior (11). Clearly, center activities can be planned with social development goals in mind.

When interactions between 5-year-olds and adults, peers, and younger children are compared with regard to weighted scores, it is apparent that the most frequent interaction of the 5-year-olds involved helping younger children (5.36). Sharing with adults was the next most prevalent interaction (5.00). Helping peers (4.12) was also prevalent, as was proximity seeking between peers (4.04). Communication between 5-year-olds and adults (3.33) was the next most frequent prosocial interaction.

The purpose of preschool is to educate the "whole child" by providing a balanced curriculum which includes activities designed to promote cognitive, affective, motoric, and social development. In some preschools there is less time for activities related to social development since teachers try to prepare their children for the rigors of future academic experiences.

The findings of the present study suggest that center/activity areas encourage prosocial development. Furthermore, interactions between 5-year-olds and adults, peers, and younger children result in different kinds of prosocial behavior. The small sample size used for the present study added to the research on the relationship between curricular contexts and prosocial behavior. After careful analysis of the research findings presented in this study, the researcher has come to several conclusions regarding prosocial behavior which can add to the current body of research.

In the past, educators have planned the preschool curriculum to meet cognitive objectives. Now we know that educators can also design centers with social development objectives in mind, blending social development into the design of the established curriculum for young children.

Various kinds of prosocial behaviors emerged as well as different qualities of prosocial behavior. Some behaviors exhibited would be valued more than others. For example, comforting a child who has been hurt is probably considered more important than sharing a marker at the writing center.

Relationship of Findings to Previous Studies

The researcher will present conclusions from the analysis of data with respect to studies presented in the literature review.

Theoretical foundations

This study looked at prosocial behavior in relation to a theoretical framework utilizing the constructivist approach.

Vygotsky (1978) emphasized the importance of children's activities, particularly while interacting with others. The students in the present study used 32 different prosocial strategies during center/activity time. These children often helped each other with specific tasks while at a center. The children in the present study were also actively engaged in dialogue which, as Vygotsky argued, is necessary for cognition which is dependant upon language.

Vygotsky (1978) believed the internalization of shared social behavior was an important component of human consciousness, which strongly supported the research finding regarding the importance of adult modeling and the effect of delayed imitation. Vygotsky proposed that what was learned while talking and working with others became the way people thought and felt. Children in this study accepted the demonstrated prosocial values of those models, such as the children in the reading center who read picture books together because they had done so at home with their parents.

Research methodology

Mussen (1983) reported that the reason research on children's prosocial behavior is so limited is because the indicators do not appear with high frequency due to the shortage of naturalistic observing of children. This study incorporated naturalistic observation of children in a preschool setting which may have contributed to the 726 observed prosocial behaviors in the 87 hours of data collection.

Eisenberg-Berg and Neal (1979) asked children to explain why they behave prosocially. Like these researchers' findings, the present study included asking children why they did something nice for another person. The children in the present study, like those in the Eisenberg-Berg and Neal study, mentioned friendship and mutual benefits of such behavior.

Mussen (1983) suggested there were certain processes and conditions through which prosocial orientations and behaviors were learned. When the researcher inspected the data to determine under which conditions various prosocial behaviors were likely to be exhibited, the researcher found the creating-type centers--art, writing, and woodworking--had the most incidents in terms of amount and variety.

Stern (1924) reported a questionnaire study which asked parents to describe situations in which their 2- to 6-year-old children expressed sympathy. This research investigation also enlisted the help of parents who completed a questionnaire and reported prosocial comments made by their children (Appendix B). Like the previous study, the present investigation found that parents overwhelmingly described their children as prosocial.

Studies on Factors Influencing Prosocial Development

Bar-Tal, Raviv, and Goldberg (1982) and Eisenberg (1986) stressed the importance of reasoning and other processes influencing prosocial behavior. Weekly, during the 15-week investigation, this researcher questioned the children after observing a prosocial interaction. After examining the 15 sets of responses, the researcher determined that the children's answers as to why they "did something nice" for someone rarely varied. The children said it was because someone needed something or "because it's good to share."

Garvey (1977) linked the development of young children's social competencies to their engagement in social pretend play. The researcher observed the children in housekeeping during this study showing delight for others, experiencing pleasure, making something for another, helping another do a task, and helping another in need. Proximity-seeking was so often observed in the housekeeping center (18 times) that the researcher believes Garvey's idea about social competency being related to pretend play has been verified by the current investigation.

Zahn-Waxler and Radke-Yarrow (1982) and Rogers and Ross (1986) found that adult modeling of prosocial behaviors fostered prosocial behavior in children. Through informal observations of parents with their children, the researcher determined that many of the parents modeled prosocial behavior both while interacting with the children and while interacting with the other adults.

Kohn (1990) and Bandura (1986) also believed adult modeling was very important. The teacher modeling at the listening center, the reading center, and the art center probably contributed to the variety of different kinds of prosocial behaviors exhibited by children at those centers.

Tegano and Parsons (1989) suggested that the schedule could affect children's play. Perhaps children needed to "warm up" before acting prosocially. There was more prosocial activity at the centers where children stayed for longer periods of time, such as art, woodworking, and writing. These three creating-type centers were more open ended than the listening center and discovery center.

Murphy (1937) studied preschoolers' prosocial behaviors when she combined direct observation with staged situations and found considerable variation in the responses of children. This researcher found the older, more mature children generally exhibited the most prosocial behavior. Also of interest was the quality of prosocial behaviors. It was the two more mature children who comforted others, a higher quality of interaction than simply sharing markers at the writing center.

The following section discusses implications for curriculum planners, including center directors, decision makers, and curriculum designers, as well as teachers.

Implications for Curriculum Planners

An implication for preschool teachers is the need to provide activities which seem to promote prosocial interaction, such as woodworking, housekeeping, a book corner, a writing center, and art. Centers at which actual things are made or where children participate in socio-dramatic play are particularly conducive to prosocial behavior. The children made "gifts" for others at art, writing, and woodworking. As the children talked to others about their project, they demonstrated and promoted prosocial activity. In this way, children served as prosocial "models" for other children in much the same way the adults served as daily models of prosocial behavior. It should be noted that the "creating"-type centers require few commercial materials and may be inexpensively incorporated into a proschool setting.

Open-ended projects, that is, activities for children where there was no one correct way to do something allowed for the most prosocial interaction. When children worked too hard to follow a pattern or re-create a design, there was very little prosocial interaction. Activities where children selected the materials and determined how to go about completing the task resulted in more prosocial interaction. After children had done an activity several times and were more sure of what they were doing, the researcher observed more "helping" behavior. This researcher believes that while trying to promote prosocial behavior, teachers should use "pattern" project work, where the teacher shows a project and the children complete it step by step in like fashion, sparingly. Open-ended activities such as painting, drawing, and clay modeling resulted in much more prosocial behavior being observed.

According to this research investigation, curriculum can be designed to promote different kinds of prosocial experiences as well as cognitive experiences. It is possible to promote prosocial behavior by including process centers that culminate in a product made by the children. The interaction between the children and the materials promotes prosocial behavior. The conversation that occurs between the children in the group is often prosocial in nature as the children question and compliment each other's work. The creating centers in this preschool included writing, art, and woodworking.

If students do not exhibit certain prosocial behaviors, altering the curricular contexts might be a way to encourage these behaviors. If the children need more practice in one kind of prosocial behavior, teachers can provide opportunities for further practice. We want children to display a broad spectrum of prosocial behaviors. In order to have a variety of prosocial behaviors, we need to provide a broad spectrum of activity centers.

Recommendations for Practitioners

These suggestions are for daily operational considerations. The researcher makes these suggestions for teachers who wish to incorporate prosocial-enhancing activities in their classroom. Different types of centers promoted different kinds of prosocial behaviors. If teachers want a variety of kinds of prosocial behaviors in their classrooms, they need to provide a variety of types of centers. If teachers want to promote or give children more exposure to one specific kind of behavior, they need to set up more of those type centers.

The researcher does not mean to imply that only those centers which allow for a great deal of prosocial behaviors should be planned. All of the center/activity areas were important to the children's development, but different areas promoted different kinds of prosocial interactions. The centers designed can even be changed throughout the year, as the teacher continually considers the needs of the children in her care.

The researcher arranged the activity centers into six categories: construction, pretend play, individual activity, process, creating things, and manipulatives. Recommendations will be made for practitioners, keeping these categories in mind. The researcher recommends creating centers for prosocial development reasons. The teacher can observe the children, noting how prosocial they are. If the children need encouragement to be more prosocial, the teacher can steer them to the following centers, as appropriate.

Construction Centers

At the construction-type centers of blocks and table toys, the researcher offers several recommendations. Since the children were not observed teaching others how to do something, teachers can facilitate such behaviors by using Polaroid photographs of structures collected in an album with the creator's name underneath. Teachers could then encourage the children at the center to recreate the structure with or without the advice of the original builder. This creative problem-solving activity should allow some of the children the opportunity to teach others how to do something. Taking pictures of the structures may also encourage the children to show something to another person.

The researcher did not observe children complimenting each other at construction centers. Leaving the structures up for several days rather than putting everything away at the end of center/activity time could also enhance prosocial behavior. It is likely that more compliments would be heard and children might ask to see something created by another. Children were never observed actively missing someone in the block center. It is possible that because of the physically active nature of the block center, children were too busy to think about someone who was not in the block center. In the block center the children did not seek proximity, again because they were busy working (lifting blocks is hard work for a child, requiring concentration in order not to knock the building over). Perhaps incorporating "Buddy Buildings" where two children would work together on a building would promote more prosocial interaction. This could also encourage requesting help, responding to requests, and planning social activities, all of which were not observed during the course of this research.

The researcher only observed the children in the construction centers helping on six occasions. In an effort to increase helping behaviors, the researcher recommends leaving "blueprints" for building objects out of manipulatives. The "blueprints" would encourage group participation and allow the older children to help the younger children interpret the diagram and assemble the structure.

Pretend Play Centers

Children demonstrated helping behavior but not behaviors teaching someone how to do something. Including different aspects of housekeeping, such as a diaper-changing table complete with diaper bag, diapers, baby wipes, and talc, can promote teaching as one child shows another child how to put a diaper on one of the dolls.

Because the researcher did not observe children in the pretend play centers giving aid, explaining ideas, offering help, or doing something for another, the teacher can suggest possible group projects. For example, "Today Sarah's baby is having a birthday. What can we do to help celebrate?" This suggestion can lead to a tea party for the children and their dolls. While planning and preparing for the party, lots of helping behaviors can emerge.

The researcher only observed four incidents of prosocial behavior in the grocery store. All four were forms of proximity seeking. The researcher believes the grocery is an area where prosocial behavior should blossom with careful planning on the part of the teacher. A few props, such as an apron from a real grocery store, a name tag, paper bags, a scale for vegetables, and a black rectangular "scanner," should encourage participation. Play money, pads of paper for grocery lists, blank checks, coupons, advertised special, and a stamp pad for the blank checks should allow for more interesting play episodes which can then encompass prosocial behavior.

Children are constant recipients of the modeling adults provide, whether the modeling is provided intentionally or not. Prosocial behaviors were not observed in the puppet center. The puppet center can be made more conducive to prosocial behavior by having a teacher model using a puppet. The teacher can use the puppet to talk to the children. Later, the children can pose questions, and other children can use puppets to answer. While participating in finger-plays or singing songs, each child can hold a puppet. When the children go to the puppet center after several positive experiences with the puppets, the children will be more likely to use the props in an appropriate manner, possibly allowing for more prosocial behavior.

Individual Activity Centers

No incidents of communication were noted at the listening center and the computer. Only 11 incidents of prosocial behavior occurred at the individual activity centers. If the group of children at the listening center decided together which book they wanted to listen to and the children at the computer were able to select the software program they used, rather than the teacher always selecting, more communication would take place. Increased communication leads to verbal as well as nonverbal interactions. Leadership skills can also emerge, as one child serves as a facilitator for the group, such as the five incidents of leadership which occurred because one child had a computer at home and was able to facilitate the group at the computer center.

At the listening center, the children helped others twice as they turned pages and adjusted the volume on the headsets). The researcher believes more helping behaviors could occur if selected children were taught how to use the tape player. This way a child could rewind the tape, enabling another group to use the center without intervention from an adult.

The researcher observed no leadership incidents but the researcher believes this was due to each child taking a participatory role at the center. Perhaps training a child to regulate the cassette player would increase the potential leadership behavior exhibited at the listening center.

If teachers want the computer to be chosen by a majority of children, the computers could be incorporated into an "office" setting with room for several children. Just setting a computer up in a corner did not seem to provide for much prosocial interaction. If children worked together on the computer (taking turns, for example), more helping behaviors would likely emerge.

Process Centers

The process centers included the reading corner and the music center. The reading corner had a variety of different kinds of prosocial behaviors. The couch seemed to be popular among children who wanted to sit together and read. Placing additional small couches, park benches, etc., would give children the opportunity to be with friends. Having a quiet alcove would likely be conducive to empathy and sharing.

The researcher suggests a special chair (the reader's equivalent of an author's chair) in which to be seated while reading to the group. During group time, the teachers in this preschool used a rocking chair while reading to the children so it was conceivable that a rocking chair could be placed in the reading corner. The researcher expects that after a child sits in this chair and reads a book to the other children in attendance, the children will thank the reader and compliment him or her on a job well done.

The researcher observed the children sharing in the music center just once. The researcher recommends providing musical experiences that have a "hands on" component--something the children could use and share with each other.

Because just one leadership behavior occurred in the music center, the researcher suggests the children occasionally be allowed to direct the actions of a group. For example, a chosen child can lead the group in a song or a finger-play, a strategy that will promote leadership as well as help the child to facilitate the group.

There were a total of six positive communication observations. The researcher believes certain musical activities can promote even more positive communication. For example, whenever children take turns while the others watched, there is a tendency to compliment the performer.

Creating Things Centers

Creating things centers include the writing center, the art center, and the woodworking center.

At the writing center nine observations were made of prosocial communication. Having "project-type" activities instead of free choice of materials can encourage even more prosocial interactions at the writing table. A blank "big book" can be made and put in the center. The children can decide what to do with the book. This "project" can encourage more leadership which was only observed 7 times and showing another person how to do something which was only observed 4 times.

Children shared at the writing center 24 times, but if fewer materials were available to the children at the writing center, the participants would be even more likely to share among themselves. For example, when talking about the letter "P," the teacher could provide pink pencils, purple pencils, pink crayons, purple crayons, paper, and a hole punch, encouraging the children to share materials as well as talk about what they were doing. This strategy of providing fewer materials was implemented at the art center, where children often shared supplies.

Communication was enhanced when children were familiar with the routine and the project at hand. For this reason, the researcher recommends that a small cadre of children occasionally do a project the day before it is introduced at group time. When the rest of the group is involved in the project, these children will be available to help teach other "how to," and even initiate conversations since they already know how to do the project.

At these creating centers, the children can be encouraged to help each other if the teacher makes appropriate suggestions, such as, "Tate, you made a nice paperweight for your dad yesterday. Do you think you could show Tracee how you did that?" Such verbal prompts also model appropriate compliments.

Manipulative Centers

The puzzles, discovery center, and water table were all manipulative-type centers. Helping behaviors never occurred at puzzles, occurred at the discovery center 6 times, and at the water table 5 times.

Perhaps if two children were always at the manipulative centers at the same time, a child would be more inclined to show what he had done to another person. Giving aid unknown to another can conceivably occur if an older child were helping a younger child. In order for any of the helping behaviors to occur, there will have to be more than one child at the center. Perhaps teachers can implement "Buddy Projects" so that two children will work together, allowing for more prosocial behaviors to occur.

The researcher observed prosocial communication once at each of the three manipulative-type centers. Having two children work together will increase the possibility of compliments, nonverbal communication, and asking to see something that belonged to another person.

In an effort to promote more prosocial activity at the manipulative centers, the researcher recommends that the children take more active roles in the activities planned. More cooking and actual experiments will give the children something to "take turns" with or share, etc.

The researcher recommends two water tables with the same number of manipulatives. This way children will have a better chance of finding two empty spaces available so they could be with a friend at the center of their choice, promoting possibly proximity-seeking behavior which occurred once at puzzles, 7 times at discovery, and 9 times at the water table.

The researcher observed helping behaviors at the water table 5 times. Having fewer materials available to the children would promote working together. The researcher believes helping behaviors are more likely to occur when children work together, sharing materials. Through collaboration, children find creative ways to use materials which lead to helping, explaining, and teaching the other person how to do something. With two water tables, it is possible for a child to leave the group and show the other group how to do something.

Snack Time

During snack time the researcher suggests the following recommendations for practitioners. Letting the children help prepare snacks during center/activity time led to prosocial comments. Snack preparation can be planned for the housekeeping center or the discovery center. Sharing behaviors occurred 40 times at snack time. Serving the snack "family style" encourages the sharing of snack food, so the researcher suggests this form of serving be used on a daily basis. When children are allowed to choose where to site, proximity seeking is promoted, and the children are more likely to engage in prosocial communication. If teachers carry on conversations with the children during snack time, the children have an opportunity to discuss what they will be playing and with whom they will be playing. Communication occurred 35 times, usually when an adult modeled appropriate conversations.

Outdoor Play Time

During outdoor play time the researcher offers the following recommendations for practitioners. Allow at least

15 to 20 minutes for play time so that the children are able to engage in play with other children. This opportunity for play will lead to more prosocial behaviors. Lining up to go inside or outside in pairs promotes proximity seeking among children. Since the researcher only observed prosocial communication 5 times during outdoor play time, the researcher suggests the adults try to engage otherwise uninvolved children in conversation. The researcher only observed empathy twice during outdoor play time. Adults can model empathy overtly whenever someone seems to be in distress. Since such opportunities rarely occurred in this preschool, such incidents may need to be staged by the adults.

Summary for Practitioners

This researcher designed the present investigation to determine the different kinds of prosocial behavior that occurred during the three curricular contexts of center/ activity time, snack time, and outdoor play time.

All centers can promote prosocial behaviors, but some types of centers promote other different kinds of behaviors or more prosocial behaviors. During center/activity time the following generalizations emerged. The construction centers (blocks, and table toys) promoted proximity seeking, leadership, and helping. Pretend play centers (housekeeping, grocery, and puppet) promoted proximity seeking, helping, and leadership. The individual centers (listening and computers) promoted leadership, proximity seeking, and helping. The process centers (reading and music) promoted proximity seeking, communication, and sharing. The creating centers (writing, art, and woodworking) promoted sharing, helping, and proximity seeking. The manipulatives centers (puzzles, discovery, and water play) promoted proximity seeking, helping, and sharing. The small group center promoted proximity seeking, helping, and leadership.

During snack time the following generalizations emerged. Helping behaviors occurred most frequently, followed by sharing, communication, and proximity seeking. Empathy and other indicators of prosocial behaviors occurred least frequently.

During outdoor play time the following generalizations emerged. Proximity seeking was by far the most prevalent prosocial indicator, followed by helping, sharing, and leadership. Communication, empathy, and other prosocial behaviors were least likely to occur.

During this investigation of 5-year-olds and their prosocial interactions with adults, peers, and younger children, the following generalizations emerged. During interactions between the nine targeted 5-year-olds and adults, sharing, communication, helping, and proximity seeking were most likely to be observed. When the 5-year-olds interacted prosocially with peers, the kinds of behavior found most likely to emerge were helping, proximity seeking, sharing, and communication. While interacting with younger children, the 5-year-olds exhibited proximity seeking, helping, leadership, and sharing.

In designing educational experiences for young children, the researcher offers the following suggestions. The creating centers were good overall promoters of prosocial behavior. If you wish to promote prosocial interactions of an empathetic nature, which rarely occurred in this preschool research investigation, creating type centers such as writing, art, and woodworking tend to promote empathy.

If the teacher is interested in more sharing behaviors, creating centers by far promoted the most sharing. Writing, art, and woodworking all allow for increased opportunities to share. The creating centers also promoted the most helping among participants. Communication was also most prevalent at the creating centers, as was proximity seeking, leadership, and other.

In looking at specific individual centers, the researcher offers the following recommendations. For more empathetic behaviors, the writing center was slightly more conducive to demonstrations of empathy. Sharing behaviors were encouraged through the use of writing and art centers. Helping behaviors were prevalent in small group, writing, and art. Communication was fostered during interactions in the writing and small group center. Proximity seeking was enhanced in small group, writing, art, and housekeeping centers. Leadership behaviors were encouraged by incorporating blocks, small group, and a writing center into the preschool curriculum. "Other" indicators of prosocial behavior (requesting help, responding to a request, self-correcting and planning prosocial activities) were best promoted through art and writing centers. According to this researcher investigation, activities can be designed to encourage specific types of prosocial behavior as well as for cognitive purposes.

Suggestions for Further Research for Prosocial Behavior

A need exists for further research into the area of prosocial behavior and its role in the overall development of the preschool child. Qualitative studies invariably reveal a number of variables which have bearings on the phenomena being studied. In this study, prosocial behaviors of 5-year-old children related to many factors, including adult influence, peer influence, the influence of younger children, and different curricular contexts during the preschool day. Previous studies have examined children's prosocial behavior (Bar-Tal et al., 1982; Corsaro, 1985; Furman, Rahe, & Hartup, 1979; Staub, 1979), but the findings of this study indicate that different curricular contexts of the classroom influence the prosocial behavior of 5-year-old children, an aspect of prosocial behavior not previously investigated.

It is possible that having fewer materials available can promote sharing. Some preschool directors purposely have a limited number of specific toys so that children will try to play together. Other directors prefer to avoid possible negotiations between children by ensuring that there are duplicates of each type of toy so that children can always have the preferred toy of choice without having to share. An area of future research can be an investigation of whether having fewer materials available influences the subsequent sharing behaviors.

Finally, further research is needed to discover more about the prosocial development observed in this study during center/activity time, snack time, and outdoor play time and its relationship to 5-year-olds interacting with adults, peers, and younger children. Prior to this research investigation, the researcher could find no studies of snack time and its value to the development in young children.

The small sample size of the present study and the lack of research in this area suggest that larger samples of different-aged children from several preschool centers need to be observed under these conditions over a longer period of time. These observations would provide a more thorough understanding of the prosocial behavior of children during different curricular contexts, also helping to answer questions about possible teacher effect and differences by the ages of the children.

Future Research Based on the Findings of this Study

The following are suggestions for further research derived from the present study:

This study can be replicated using a larger sample from several different preschools, incorporating an investigation into the prosocial behavior of mixed- and same-aged groups of children.

In addition, a study of the prosocial behavior of children can be investigated as children interact with a variety of center/activity materials. The specific social needs of a child and specific center/activities that may help meet these needs can be investigated.

In looking across the findings of this research investigation, the researcher wonders if the children in this preschool were prosocial in their behavior because of several factors, including, but not limited to

--The large number of center/activity choices available to the children. The present study was conducted in a very enriched environment.

--The low pupil/adult ratio (1:7).

--The positive models provided by the adults in this center. The teachers and support teachers participated in this study without financial remuneration in order to help the researcher, one of their college professors.

--The short preschool day, just 3 hours daily.

--Most of the parents who dropped off their children did not work outside the home. The children who were dropped off by someone else usually had a full-time caregiver in the home.

--Since the preschool was mixed-age, it was possible that the children had prosocial behaviors reinforced for more than a year prior to this investigation.

--This preschool did not stress academic skills and did not allow dittos or worksheets to be used.

The researcher suggests each of these factors could serve as possible variables in future research investigations.

Summary

Because different curricular contexts encouraged different kinds of prosocial behaviors, it is important to remember how important each curricular context is in the overall social development. Outdoor play time, which was previously thought to be a time for socializing with friends, actually provided fewer prosocial interactions. Center/activity time, previously considered a curricular context designed for cognitive objectives, actually provided for the most prosocial interactions. Snack time, which is not usually considered a time for socialization, had less prosocial interactions than center/activity time but more than outdoor play time.

The other particularly interesting finding was that 5-year-olds interacted with adults, peers, and younger children in approximately the same proportion when numbers of participants were weighted. Even though the preschool incorporated mixed-age grouping, the children interacted with all of the available participants fairly equally.

APPENDIX A
CODING FORMS

A-1 A-2 K-1 M-1 S-2
J-1 J-2 S-1 T-1

DATE____________________
DAY____________________
Time 1:15 p.m.-1:50 p.m.

Activity Time

Green-Group

(a) with an adult (b) peer/s (c) younger child

A-1 A-2 K-1 M-1 S-2
J-1 J-2 S-1 T-1

DATE____________________
DAY_____________________
Time 2:30 p.m.-2:50 p.m.

SNACK TIME

Green-Group

Serving____________________________

(a) with an adult (b) peer/s (c) younger child

A-1 A-2 K-1 M-1 S-2
J-1 J-2 S-1 T-1

DATE______________________
DAY_______________________
Time 2:50 p.m.-3:05 p.m.

PLAY TIME

Green-Group

Outdoor

Hill

(a) with an adult (b) peer/s (c) younger child

APPENDIX B
PARENTAL REPORTING OF PROSOCIAL BEHAVIOR

Child ______________________________

Date ______________________________

Please describe any comments your child has made regarding other children or adults from the preschool:

APPENDIX C
PERMISSION LETTER

It is my understanding that while my child, __________, is in attendance at the Florida Southern College Early Learning Laboratory Preschool, he/she will be observed both in the same room and from an observation booth with one-way mirrors. During this time my child may be recorded on video and audio tape. Photographs will be taken of my child and exact quotations of my child will be written as dictated.

Students enrolled in EDU 311 will do extensive observation reports on selected children. EDU 312 students will complete individual skill reports on a prescribed screening device. Sample pages of my child's daily journal will be collected on a weekly basis.

My child will also be available for inclusion in the research project designed and carried out by the early childhood faculty members, including the doctoral research conducted by Miss Babcock.

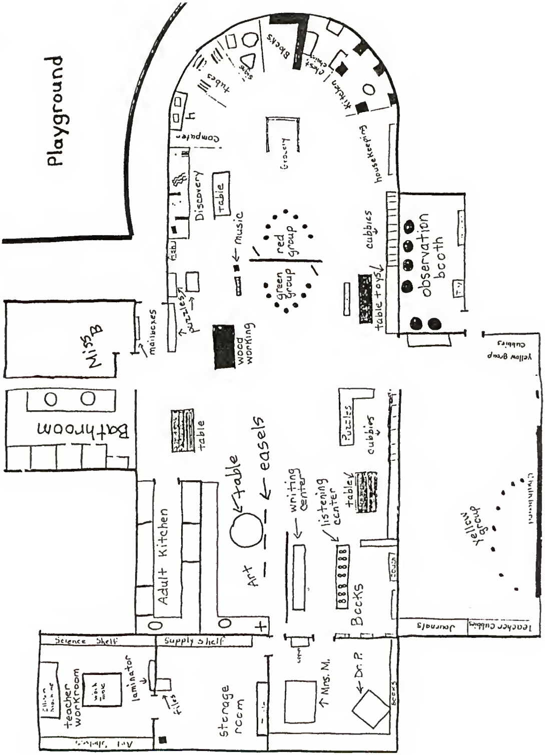
It is also my understanding that the laboratory preschool is established for the purpose of training pre-service early childhood teachers and conducting on-going research in early childhood education. I realize I am free to withdraw my child from any and all of the above-mentioned activities by doing so in writing. I give permission for my child, ______ ________, to participate in the preschool program.

____

________________________ (Child)

________________________ (Group)
Academic year 91/92

APPENDIX D
PRESCHOOL FLOOR PLAN


Playground
computer
tubs
blocks
kitchen / chest
housekeeping
grocery
Discovery
Table
music
red group
green group
cubbies
observation booth
TV
table + toys
puzzles
wood working
mailboxes
Miss B
yellow group cubbies
Bathroom
table
easels
table
Puzzles
cubbies
writing center
listening center
table
Adult Kitchen
Art
Books
Yellow group
chalkboard
Journals
Teacher cubbies
Science Shelf
Supply shelf
teacher workroom
work table
laminator
files
storage room
Mrs. M.
Dr. P.
Books
Art Shelves

APPENDIX E
CHARTS

QUESTION 1

Prosocial Behavior	Activity	Snack	Outdoor
Empathy			
1. Shows concern for someone in distress.	7	4	2
2. Shows delight for someone experiencing pleasure.	1		
Sharing			
3. Shares something with another.	31	26	4
4. Gives something of his/her own to another.	14	3	6
5. Takes turns with toys or activities.	10	4	5
6. Waits for turn without a fuss.	1	7	
14. Makes something for another.	20		
Helping			
7. Helps another do a task.	59	15	10
8. Helps another in need.	26	5	3
12. Teaches how to do.	9	17	2
19. Shows something to another.	15	1	
20. Gives aid unknown to another.	1	1	
22. Explains an idea to another.	11	27	2
28. Offers help.	2	4	1
32. Does something for another.			

Prosocial Behavior	Activity	Snack	Outdoor
Communication			
10. Compliments others.	3	4	
18. Makes positive comments.	17	25	4
21. Asks to see something of another.	1	2	
29. Engages positive nonverbal communication.	4	4	1
Proximity Seeking			
9. Seeks physical contact.	12	16	25
11. Seeks proximity (Marriage).	69	19	19
23. Invites another to join.	20	6	3
24. Twosome (to be with a special friend).	22	1	11
25. Upset without friend/missing someone.	6	1	1
26. Asks others to join.	20		
27. Seeks others to play with.	1		
Leadership			
13. Facilitates group.	36	18	6
17. Facilitates play.	19	2	5

Prosocial Behavior	Activity	Snack	Outdoor
Other			
15. Requests help (you must feel reasonably sure your request will be responded to in a positive manner in order to ask for help).	17	4	1
16. Responds to request (in a positive manner).	1		
30. Self-corrects (When a child modifies his/her behavior to accommodate another person).	5		1
31. Plans prosocial activity.	5		1

QUESTION 1
(by Center)

Prosocial Behavior	Small Group
Empathy	
1. Shows concern for someone in distress.	1
2. Shows delight for someone experiencing pleasure.	
Sharing	
3. Shares something with another.	4
4. Gives something of his/her own to another.	2
5. Takes turns with toys or activities.	
6. Waits for turn without a fuss.	
14. Makes something for another.	
Helping	
7. Helps another do a task.	11
8. Helps another in need.	2
12. Teaches how to do.	3
19. Shows something to another.	4
20. Gives aid unknown to another.	1
22. Explains an idea to another.	3
28. Offers help.	
32. Does something for another.	

Prosocial Behavior	Small Group
Communication	
10. Compliments others.	2
18. Makes positive comments.	4
21. Asks to see something of another.	
29. Engages positive nonverbal communication.	2
Proximity Seeking	
9. Seeks physical contact.	2
11. Seeks proximity (Marriage).	14
23. Invites another to join.	5
24. Twosome (to be with a special friend).	5
25. Upset without friend/missing someone.	1
26. Asks others to join.	
27. Seeks others to play with.	
Leadership	
13. Facilitates group.	8
17. Facilitates play.	2

Prosocial Behavior	Small Group
Other	
15. Requests help (you must feel reasonably sure your request will be responded to in a positive manner in order to ask for help).	2
16. Responds to request (in a positive manner).	
30. Self-corrects (When a child modifies his/her behavior to accommodate another person).	1
31. Plans prosocial activity.	

Prosocial Behavior	Computer	Puppets	Blocks
Empathy			
1. Shows concern for someone in distress.			1
2. Shows delight for someone experiencing pleasure.	1		
Sharing			
3. Shares something with another.	1		
4. Gives something of his/her own to another.			1
5. Takes turns with toys or activities.			1
6. Waits for turn without a fuss.			
14. Makes something for another.			
Helping			
7. Helps another do a task.			5
8. Helps another in need.			
12. Teaches how to do.			
19. Shows something to another.			2
20. Gives aid unknown to another.			
22. Explains an idea to another.			
28. Offers help.			
32. Does something for another.			

Prosocial Behavior	Computer	Puppets	Blocks
Communication			
10. Compliments others.			
18. Makes positive comments.			1
21. Asks to see something of another.			
29. Engages positive nonverbal communication.			
Proximity Seeking			
9. Seeks physical contact.			1
11. Seeks proximity (Marriage).			
23. Invites another to join.			2
24. Twosome (to be with a special friend).	1		3
25. Upset without friend/missing someone.			
26. Asks others to join.			2
27. Seeks others to play with.			1
Leadership			
13. Facilitates group.	3		5
17. Facilitates play.	2		6

Prosocial Behavior	Computer	Puppets	Blocks
Other			
15. Requests help (you must feel reasonably sure your request will be responded to in a positive manner in order to ask for help).			1
16. Responds to request (in a positive manner).			
30. Self-corrects (When a child modifies his/her behavior to accommodate another person).			
31. Plans prosocial activity.			

Prosocial Behavior	Discovery	Woodworking	Grocery
Empathy			
1. Shows concern for someone in distress.		1	
2. Shows delight for someone experiencing pleasure.			
Sharing			
3. Shares something with another.	1	2	
4. Gives something of his/her own to another.	2	1	
5. Takes turns with toys or activities.			
6. Waits for turn without a fuss.			
14. Makes something for another.		5	
Helping			
7. Helps another do a task.	3	2	
8. Helps another in need.		4	
12. Teaches how to do.			
19. Shows something to another.			
20. Gives aid unknown to another.			
22. Explains an idea to another.	3	1	
28. Offers help.			
32. Does something for another.			

Prosocial Behavior	Discovery	Woodworking	Grocery
Communication			
10. Compliments others.			
18. Makes positive comments.	1	1	
21. Asks to see something of another.			
29. Engages positive nonverbal communication.			
Proximity Seeking			
9. Seeks physical contact.	1	1	
11. Seeks proximity (Marriage).	5	2	2
23. Invites another to join.			
24. Twosome (to be with a special friend).	1		2
25. Upset without friend/missing someone.			
26. Asks others to join.			
27. Seeks others to play with.			
Leadership			
13. Facilitates group.	3	1	
17. Facilitates play.		1	

Prosocial Behavior	Discovery	Woodworking	Grocery	Other
15. Requests help (you must feel reasonably sure your request will be responded to in a positive manner in order to ask for help).	1			
16. Responds to request (in a positive manner).				
30. Self-corrects (When a child modifies his/her behavior to accommodate another person).				
31. Plans prosocial activity.				

Prosocial Behavior	Writing	Art	Puzzles
Empathy			
1. Shows concern for someone in distress.	2	1	
2. Shows delight for someone experiencing pleasure.			
Sharing			
3. Shares something with another.	5	7	3
4. Gives something of his/her own to another.	2	4	
5. Takes turns with toys or activities.	3	5	1
6. Waits for turn without a fuss.		1	
14. Makes something for another.	14	1	
Helping			
7. Helps another do a task.	11	8	
8. Helps another in need.	2	4	
12. Teaches how to do.	1	3	
19. Shows something to another.	4		
20. Gives aid unknown to another.			
22. Explains an idea to another.	1	2	
28. Offers help.		1	
32. Does something for another.			

Prosocial Behavior	Writing	Art	Puzzles
Communication			
10. Compliments others.	1		
18. Makes positive comments.	6	1	1
21. Asks to see something of another.	1	2	
29. Engages positive nonverbal communication.	1	1	
Proximity Seeking			
9. Seeks physical contact.	1	1	
11. Seeks proximity (Marriage).	13	7	
23. Invites another to join.	1		
24. Twosome (to be with a special friend).	3	1	1
25. Upset without friend/missing someone.	3	1	
26. Asks others to join.			
27. Seeks others to play with.			
Leadership			
13. Facilitates group.	7	4	
17. Facilitates play.			

Prosocial Behavior	Writing	Art	Puzzles
Other			
15. Requests help (you must feel reasonably sure your request will be responded to in a positive manner in order to ask for help).	3	8	
16. Responds to request (in a positive manner).		1	
30. Self-corrects (When a child modifies his/her behavior to accommodate another person).			1
31. Plans prosocial activity.	5		

Prosocial Behavior	Housekeeping	Table Toys	Reading Corner
Empathy			
1. Shows concern for someone in distress.			
2. Shows delight for someone experiencing pleasure.	1		
Sharing			
3. Shares something with another.			3
4. Gives something of his/her own to another.			
5. Takes turns with toys or activities.			1
6. Waits for turn without a fuss.			
14. Makes something for another.	1		
Helping			
7. Helps another do a task.	7	1	3
8. Helps another in need.	2		
12. Teaches how to do.			
19. Shows something to another.	1		1
20. Gives aid unknown to another.			
22. Explains an idea to another.			
28. Offers help.			
32. Does something for another.			

Prosocial Behavior	Housekeeping	Table Toys	Reading Corner
Communication			
10. Compliments others.			
18. Makes positive comments.		1	1
21. Asks to see something of another.			
29. Engages positive nonverbal communication.			
Proximity Seeking			
9. Seeks physical contact.	1	1	
11. Seeks proximity (Marriage).	8	3	1
23. Invites another to join.			2
24. Twosome (to be with a special friend).	1		3
25. Upset without friend/missing someone.			1
26. Asks others to join.			1
27. Seeks others to play with.			
Leadership			
13. Facilitates group.	2		1
17. Facilitates play.	4		1

Prosocial Behavior	Housekeeping	Table Toys	Reading Corner
Other			
15. Requests help (you must feel reasonably sure your request will be responded to in a positive manner in order to ask for help).	1		1
16. Responds to request (in a positive manner).			
30. Self-corrects (When a child modifies his/her behavior to accommodate another person).			
31. Plans prosocial activity.			1

Prosocial Behavior	Water Table	Music	Listening
Empathy			
1. Shows concern for someone in distress.			
2. Shows delight for someone experiencing pleasure.			
Sharing			
3. Shares something with another.		1	
4. Gives something of his/her own to another.	2		
5. Takes turns with toys or activities.	1		
6. Waits for turn without a fuss.			
14. Makes something for another.			
Helping			
7. Helps another do a task.	3		1
8. Helps another in need.			
12. Teaches how to do.			
19. Shows something to another.			
20. Gives aid unknown to another.			
22. Explains an idea to another.	1		
28. Offers help.	1		1
32. Does something for another.			

Prosocial Behavior	Water Table	Music	Listening
Communication			
10. Compliments others.	1	6	
18. Makes positive comments.			
21. Asks to see something of another.			
29. Engages positive nonverbal communication.			
Proximity Seeking			
9. Seeks physical contact.		1	
11. Seeks proximity (Marriage).	4		
23. Invites another to join.	3		
24. Twosome (to be with a special friend).	2		1
25. Upset without friend/missing someone.			
26. Asks others to join.			
27. Seeks others to play with.			
Leadership			
13. Facilitates group.			
17. Facilitates play.	2	1	

Prosocial Behavior	Water Table	Music	Listening	Other
15. Requests help (you must feel reasonably sure your request will be responded to in a positive manner in order to ask for help).				
16. Responds to request (in a positive manner).				
30. Self-corrects (When a child modifies his/her behavior to accommodate another person).				
31. Plans prosocial activity.				

QUESTION 2

Prosocial Behavior	Adult	Peer	Younger
Empathy			
1. Shows concern for someone in distress.		20	4
2. Shows delight for someone experiencing pleasure.			2
Sharing			
3. Shares something with another.	4	24	12
4. Gives something of his/her own to another.	10	16	9
5. Takes turns with toys or activities.		11	5
6. Waits for turn without a fuss.	3	3	3
14. Makes something for another.	12	19	5
Helping			
7. Helps another do a task.		49	35
8. Helps another in need.	1	20	8
12. Teaches how to do.	2	10	14
19. Shows something to another.	8	5	1
20. Gives aid unknown to another.			2
22. Explains an idea to another.		5	6
28. Offers help.	2	3	2
32. Does something for another.			

Prosocial Behavior	Adult	Peer	Younger
Communication			
10. Compliments others.	3	5	2
18. Makes positive comments.	14	24	8
21. Asks to see something of another.	1	3	
29. Engages positive nonverbal communication.	2	9	2
Proximity Seeking			
9. Seeks physical contact.	2	19	33
11. Seeks proximity (Marriage).	4	50	21
23. Invites another to join.	5	8	3
24. Twosome (to be with a special friend).		10	17
25. Upset without friend/missing someone.	2	5	2
26. Asks others to join.		1	
27. Seeks others to play with.			
Leadership			
13. Facilitates group.	5	15	13
17. Facilitates play.	2	8	12

Prosocial Behavior	Adult	Peer	Younger
Other			
15. Requests help (you must feel reasonably sure your request will be responded to in a positive manner in order to ask for help).	5	13	3
16. Responds to request (in a positive manner).		1	
30. Self-corrects (When a child modifies his/her behavior to accommodate another person).			1
31. Plans prosocial activity.	1	3	3

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Florie Babcock was born in Seattle, Washington, and raised in Orlando, Florida. She received the Bachelor of Arts degree in elementary education from the University of Central Florida in 1980 and began teaching in Sumter County. In 1982, she received her Master of Education degree from the University of Central Florida.

While teaching public school, she entered graduate school at the University of Florida in 1984. She specialized in early childhood. After earning her Specialist in Education (1987), she entered the doctoral program in curriculum and instruction, again specializing in early childhood education. During her graduate program, Ms. Babcock taught elementary school, Chapter I, and SLD classes. For the past two years she has been a faculty member of Florida Southern College in Lakeland, Florida, where she is an assistant professor and teaches undergraduate courses in elementary education, early childhood, and exceptional education. She also supervises student interns and helps direct the Early Learning Lab Preschool. Ms. Babcock will receive her Ed.D. from the University of Florida in 1993. She will continue to teach in the Education Department at Florida Southern College.

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Education.

Linda L. Lamme

Linda L. Lamme, Chairperson
Professor of Instruction and
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I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Education.

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